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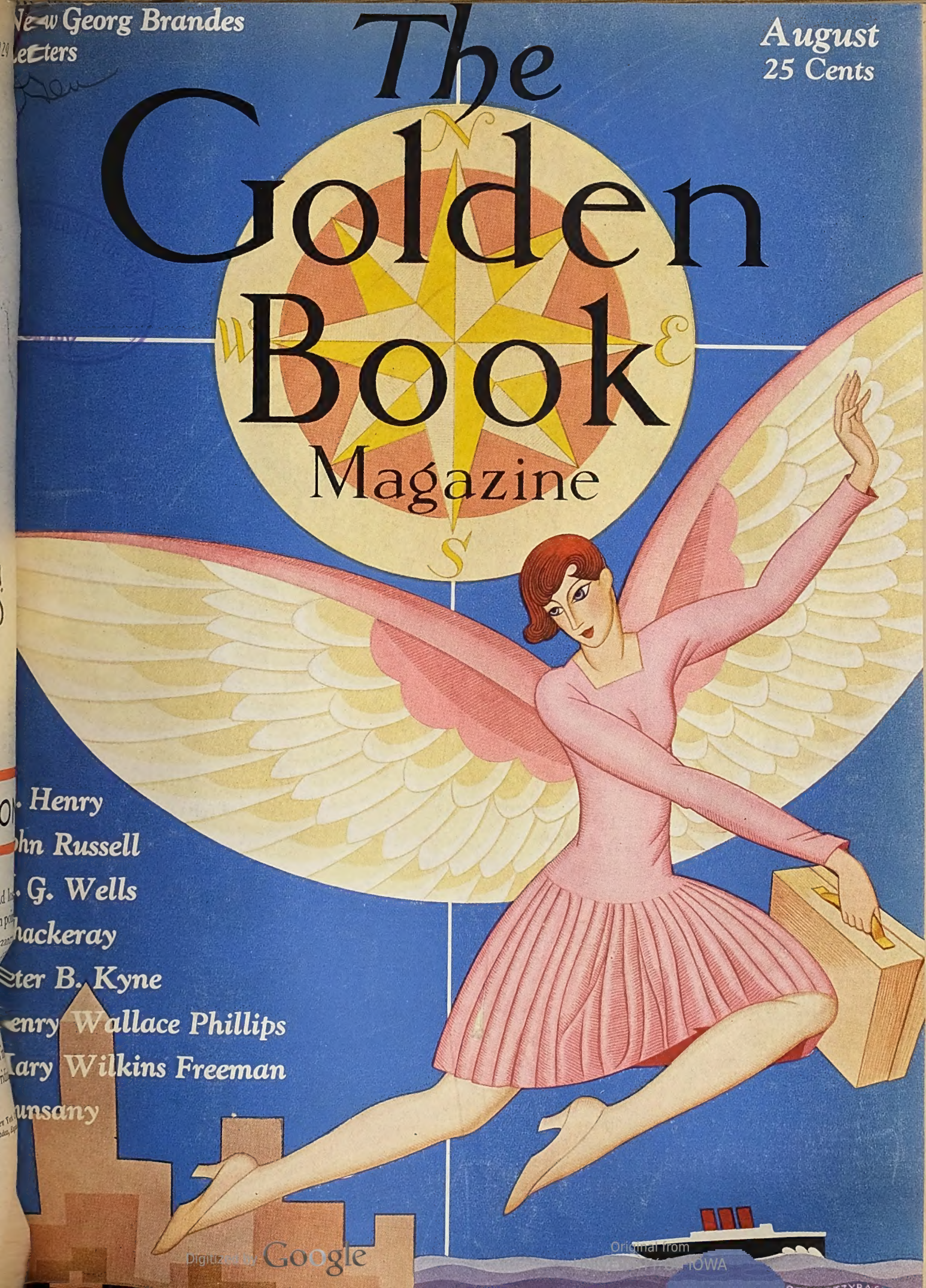

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THE GOLDEN BOOK* MAGAZINE

VOL. X CONTENTS *for* AUGUST, 1929 No. 56

		PAGE
Cover Design	BORIS ARTZYBASHEFF	
Who's Who in the Golden Book		4
Authors and Books		12
Skippy Buys a Soda	PERCY L. CROSBY	21
At the Threshold of Perfection Woodcut by Heistand Miller	JOSEPH EDGAR CHAMBERLIN	22
One Dollar's Worth Original linoleum cuts by Harvey A. Van Valkenburgh	O. HENRY	23
Time, You Old Gypsy Man. *A Poem*	RALPH HODGSON	26
Night Club Drawings by James Reid	KATHARINE BRUSH	27
The Red Mark Original woodcuts by M. J. Gallegher	JOHN RUSSELL	32
So They Say		45
Aunt Johanna Original linoleum cuts by Carroll Holliday	HENRY WALLACE PHILLIPS	47
The Society Bee Drawings by Fred Nankivel	PETER B. KYNE	53
The Door in the Wall Drawings by T. K. Hanna and John Wolcott Adams	H. G. WELLS	65
Old Books. *A Poem*	MARGARET WIDDEMER	71
The Simple Cure Translated by Cesarina Hudson	MASSIMO BONTEMPELLI	72
The Vendetta Drawings by Helen Disbrow	W. PETT RIDGE	75
Spanish Folk Song Translated by Havelock Ellis		76
Georg Brandes to Jonas Lie Translations by Julius Moritzen		77
A Plan for a Prize Novel	WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY	81
A Kitchen Colonel Drawings by August Henkel	MARY E. WILKINS FREEMAN	82
When Young Hearts Break. *A Poem* Translated by Louis Untermeyer	HEINRICH HEINE	88
The Lost Silk Hat. *A Play*	LORD DUNSANY	89
Mr. Pickwick	GILBERT K. CHESTERTON	91
Hors-d'œuvres from the Newest Books		92
Aftermath. Part II	JAMES LANE ALLEN	94
Travel News	ROGER SHAW	108
Investment Trends		110
Music and Radio.	ALFRED V. FRANKENSTEIN	113

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Who's Who *in the* Golden Book

Readers of the Golden Book know by this time what we think of O. Henry the story teller, and what we know of his kaleidoscopic life. And from the stories of editors who had dealings with him comes a picture of his elusive, irresponsible, utterly delightful personality. There are few other ways to get this picture, for never was a popular author so successfully shy of publicity as he. But on the other hand, the picture is a clear one, for every editor who ever tried to handle him has a hundred anecdotes.

O. Henry never had a story done on time, and he had always been paid for it in advance, or needed to be paid for it on the spot. Sometimes he came to collect his money in person (and there are plenty of stories of these visits of his). Sometimes the editors went to call on him, to sit over him until he finished his work (this was also productive of good yarns). Sometimes O. Henry sent letters along with his stories, and these letters are the most precious possessions of the amused and exasperated editors who received them. Here are several written to "Bob" Davis of the Munsey Company, who at the time had O. Henry under contract. "Bill" was apparently O. Henry's own pet name for the genial Mr. Davis:

Dear Old Bill:

At last I have hove anchor at —— Waverly Place, and have an address to give you. I am in Gilman Hall's apartment, and can now continue to turn out the old blown-in-the-bottle brand of fiction.

I am a man of damn few words. I want $125 (don't read that a dollar and a quarter). That in addition to the $150 that I screwed out of Merwin during your absence will make a total of $275, which will be more than covered by the moral and entertaining tale that I hereby agree to have finished and delivered to you all by 10:30 a. m. Monday, Aug. 27, or perhaps earlier.

Pursue the liberal policy, and get the best stuff.

Personally and officially I greet you and make obeisance.

Consistently,
Bill the Bedouin.

P. S. I want the dough, not a check (but a check will do) by the bearer, or else a few well-chosen words of refusal.

Dear Bill:

Will you be nice enough to let me go over the proofs of all my stories before they are published? The printer, with his usual hellfiredness, seems always to butcher the meaning by setting up words that do not appear in the ms. Also please kill your proof reader.

Hoping, etc., yours, O. H.

Dear Bill:

Here she are. I reckon you or some intelligent person in the office can tell where the patches fit. If you don't like the new title, say so. There are others.

Fulsomely, Willie.

Mon Cher Bill:

Can you raise the immediate goods for this, and once more rescue little Ruby from certain death?

The big story will be handed in Monday for you to try on the piano. From next week on I'll show you a story every week. I'm going to make some of the best samples of 2,000 and 2,500-word stuff that's possible. That's the length that counts.

I'm feeling fine, and hope these few lines will—say, don't forget to send the $25.

Don't do it if you refuse to do it.

Yours ever, O. H.

Hello, Mr. Bill:

Say—a fool and his money, etc.

Is there anything doing for about $49.98 today for the purpose of purchasing things for sale in the marts? I had to send most all of that stuff abroad that you gimme the other day.

Don't press the matter if it seems out of order. I'll be even and ahead of the game pretty soon. There will come to you on Monday the new story.

Greetings and undying veneration in either case.

O. H.

Herbert George Wells ("H. G." to his friends) is commonly thought of as a social philosopher and scientist even when he is being considered as a novelist or story-writer. This is in a way unjust to Mr. Wells, for while he is probably one of the most trenchant thinkers in England today ("the only one who has not stopped growing. One can lie awake at night and hear him grow," says Chesterton), he is also a very fine artist. He can write stories without a social or scientific thought in them which content themselves with being delicately sensitive studies of the human heart and mind and soul. To this "The Door in the Wall" bears witness.

Wells was born at Bromley, Kent, in 1866, the son of a professional cricketer who became a shopkeeper, and a lady's maid who became a housekeeper to help eke out the family fortunes. He held scholarships at school and at the Royal College of Science, and, after he graduated, taught biology for three years. He began to write in 1893 for the *Pall Mall Gazette*—at first articles and reviews, followed by the romances that grew from his irrepressible scientific imagination.

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If you are interested in acquiring a usable knowledge of the French language in the shortest possible time, mail the coupon at once! This offer cannot be held open indefinitely. The first two lessons will be free only for the duration of this Special Introductory Offer. If you are at all interested act *now*. It costs nothing.

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The Time Machine appeared in 1895, and was a great success. Other novels and stories rapidly followed, in which the newest scientific discoveries (and some he invented himself) were used to further his political and social convictions. *Kipps, Tono Bungay, The History of Mr. Polly,* in which he attains full stature as an artist, came a little later. Of his many books some of the most famous, aside from those already mentioned, are *The War of the Worlds, The Stolen Bacillus, The Island of Dr. Moreau, In the Days of the Comet, The War in the Air, Ann Veronica, Joan and Peter, The New Machiavelli, The Passionate Friends, Mr. Britling Sees It Through, The Research Magnificent, The Soul of a Bishop, The Undying Fire,* and in 1920 the *Outline of History* which, in spite of much criticism of inevitable omissions and disproportions, is perhaps Mr. Wells's most important work.

ONCE UPON A TIME—less than thirty years ago, in fact—Percy Crosby and his spies were laying deep, dark plots for grapevine messages in school, looking innocent when accused of pillow fights, and hopping around Brooklyn corners to soda stores with just some such scheme as "Skippy's" for getting his money's worth. For Percy Crosby was—and is—"Skippy."

By the time Mr. Crosby was twenty he had worked on nearly every newspaper in New York, cartooning and sketching. By the time he was twenty-four, his fame already established at home, he was in the trenches, doing a daily comic strip for American newspapers. These were afterwards published in book form as *The Rookie of the 13th Squad.* "Skippy" first came into existence in *Life* shortly after Mr. Crosby's return from the war.

Mr. Crosby's ambition is to retire as soon as possible to his fifty-three-acre farm in Langley, Virginia, to ride horseback, and to write. He says nothing about drawing, but we won't believe that Mr. Crosby could ever stop drawing.

MAXIM LIEBER, a final judge of the O. Henry Prize Award Committee, believes that Katharine Brush's "Night Club" was the best story of its year. Certainly even the casual reader coming upon this story—never having heard of its author, perhaps, for Mrs. Brush is still comparatively unknown—would recognize that here was a tale which stood out sharply from its fellows, one which would last in one's memory. It is a rapidly moving, realistic picture of a night club; it tells a dozen incidental stories, each in a handful of words; its theme is one of the oldest in life and literature: that life is stranger than fiction, and that romance is always distant.

Mrs. Brush is a young novelist and newspaper woman from Middletown, Conn., who now lives in New York. She has worked on the Boston *Herald* and *Traveler,* beginning at the age of sixteen (conducting a daily column of motion picture news). Her two novels are *Glitter* and *Little Sins,* and a collection of her short stories is about to appear.

JOHN RUSSELL, author of "The Red Mark," is also Toleafoa Tusitala, a chief of the Samoans. For although Mr. Russell was born in Davenport, Iowa, he has spent most of the forty-four years since then wandering in the South and East. He knows Peru and Panama, the Ganges and Port Said, and he is at his best when writing of the South Sea Islands, for here he is most at home. But wherever he has gone, whatever place he writes about, he has absorbed its most brilliant colours, drawn to himself its most exciting adventures, impaled character on the point of his sharp observation as one might catch a butterfly on a pin. His stories are dramatic, virile, tense, and—what we like best—terse.

THE GOLDEN BOOK came upon John Russell three years ago, and seven stories of his have already appeared in our pages. None of them is better than "The Red Mark," and few adventure stories could be

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Your Answer may alter your whole career . .

Are you by nature a Talker *or* Writer ?

MANY brilliant, able writers are conversationally diffident, shy . . . even awkward. On the other hand, some of the most sparklingly colorful and interesting "talkers" admit that they are hard put to compose a passably interesting letter. Equal aptitude for *both* writing and talking is, it seems, rare in one person.

Is there then a pronounced functional difference in people as regards these two methods of expression?

Obviously there is . . . And the person who possesses the writing instinct—even though it is not fully developed—often feels himself somewhat set apart from the conversationalist type.

In fact, these two schools of expression are in such obvious contrast that backwardness in conversation may, in itself, *indicate* latent, natural ability in the world of letters.

If WRITING seems to be your natural channel of expression, read this

Analyze yourself . . . Do you enjoy writing? . . . Is this form of expression more natural to you than any other? . . . Is *writing* the easy, satisfying outlet to your thoughts, ideas, feelings?

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more memorable. Mr. Russell is, as W. L. George says, "a wholly individual artist held in the grip of the savage emotions of the South Seas, inflamed with their colour, bound by their combination of ferocity and sweetness."

READERS FOR ENTERTAINMENT (nine-tenths of us, nine-tenths of the time) settle back comfortably when they see Peter B. Kyne's name on a story. The creator of Cappy Ricks, retired ship owner and operator, of youthful sea captains, of strong young engineers and radiant western goddesses, of shyster lawyers and pioneer millionaires, comes himself from the west about which he writes. He was born in San Francisco in 1880, educated in its public schools and at business college, and began to learn the ways of the business world first as a clerk in a merchandise store, and later in the wholesale lumber and shipbuilding trades.

Mr. Kyne served in the Philippines during the Spanish-American War, and as a captain of field artillery during the World War. He wrote his first story in 1913, and its success encouraged him after his return from France to devote all his time to writing. In the relatively few years since then he has written sixteen books and innumerable short stories, and is now one of the most popular authors in America. Among his best-known books are *Cappy Ricks, The Valley of the Giants, Kindred of the Dust, The Pride of Palomar,* and *The Understanding Heart.* One of his short stories, "The Go-Getter," which has already been published in the GOLDEN BOOK, has been distributed in tens of thousands by employers to their men.

There is an engaging spirit and a very American flavour to everything Mr. Kyne writes, and these are not lacking in "The Society Bee." Every one of the characters in that story is drawn from a true-to-life type, and, as usual, the action is plentiful.

HENRY WALLACE PHILLIPS wrote "Aunt Johanna" on a bet. A fellow author had wagered that an old lady like Aunt Johanna could not be made into a heroine, nor could apple-pie be made the food of romance. And we think that if ever anyone won a bet, Mr. Phillips did. "In her time, Aunt Johanna pulled down the pillars of the temple," Mr. Phillips admits in a letter to us. "I got a lot of good words for the old lady and her Injun. The females of the species were taken by the notion that 'each old maid secure a heathen of her own.'" It is a story whose human characters and rollicking fun are wholesomely in the tradition of Artemus Ward and Josh Billings.

Mr. Phillips was born in New York City in 1869, and the first of his *Red Saunders* books appeared in 1902. *Trolley Folly* appeared in 1909. For the last few years Mr. Phillips has lived in Los Angeles, writing for the moving-picture industry, and contributing to magazines.

A GRAY DOORSTEP and a kitchen yard where bald patches of earth have worn through the grass; lonely sunlight without, and from within the clatter of dishes and the whiff of baking cake: Mary E. Wilkins Freeman can picture these things without describing them. She can show you New England folk—a little proud, a little pathetic, kindly, and mean—without comment. With almost childlike simplicity she spreads before you the life that she knows. This can be very high art indeed, and we believe that Mrs. Freeman's transcends completely its touches of a rapidly-dating style and the sentimentality which went with it.

While there is much to say about Mrs. Freeman's art—for she is often named as one of the foremost American short-story writers—there is little to say about her life. Mary Eleanor Wilkins was born in Randolph, Mass., in 1862, of Puritan descent, and, until her marriage, she had hardly ventured out of the New England atmosphere. For many years following her graduation from Mount Holyoke Seminary she was secretary to Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes. Perhaps he influenced her writing, and perhaps it was at his office that she met her future husband, Dr. Freeman. After her marriage she moved with him to Metuchen, New Jersey, where she still lives and continues to write. She has published twenty-seven books, most of them short story collections, of which *A New England Nun, Silence, The Love of Parson Lord, Six Trees, The Wind in the Rose Bush, The Winning Lady, Copy Cat* and other stories are a few.

SIX-FOOT, EIGHTEENTH BARON Lord Dunsany whisks off into the land of fantasy at the touch of his pen to paper. This ex-captain of the Royal Inniskilling Fusilliers with his five names (Edward John Moreton Drax Plunkett) is a poet with an imagination and feeling for drama which makes gods walk the earth, kingdoms rear themselves in far places, or London turn itself upside-down while the reader follows eagerly.

Born in 1878 in London, he was educated at Eton and Sandhurst, and served with the Coldstream Guards and in the Boer War. In 1909 a presentation of *The Glittering Gate* in Dublin attracted the attention of the literary world. A poet-playwright had appeared who was like no other poet or playwright. His fantastic patterns hid meaning; his action was swift; his prose as simple as it was rich—as prose founded on the Bible is apt to be. And while the scene of the Dunsany comedy published here may seem surprisingly everyday after what

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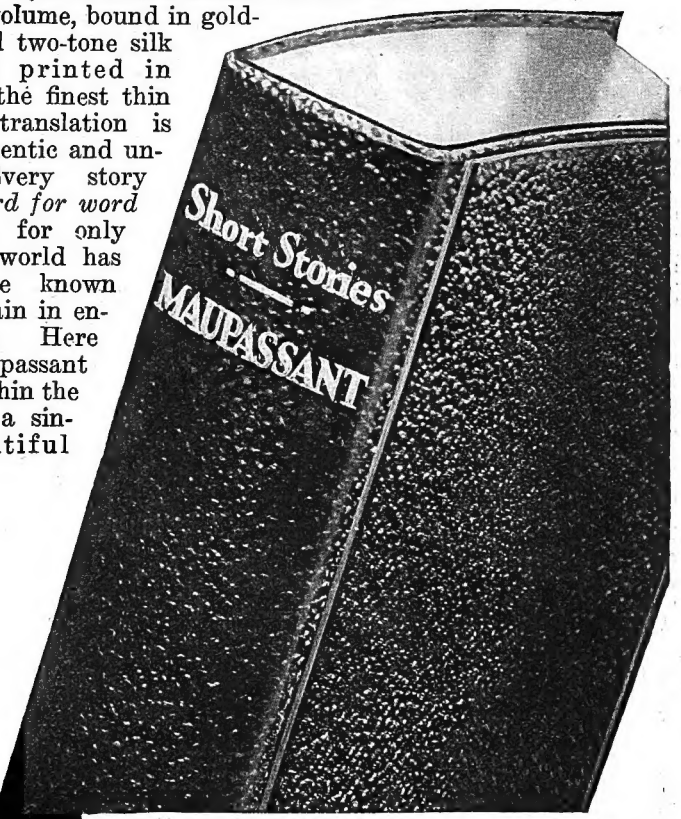

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WHEN MASSIMO BONTEMPELLI goes about in Rome he is pointed out as one of Italy's leading young humourists. His light, satiric touch, his engagingly fantastic imaginings have won the hearts of all Italy and of a large part of the rest of Europe. He is a short-story writer primarily, but also a journalist, novelist, musician, and author of a play for men and marionettes which has been produced by Luigi Pirandello.

Bontempelli started his career as a teacher of literature and then as a journalist. During the World War he won several distinctions for gallantry in the field, and since his return to Rome in 1919 has continued as journalist and author with steadily growing recognition. So far as we know, "The Simple Cure" has never before appeared in English.

IT WOULD BE INTERESTING to know if, when Thackeray wrote his delightful "Plan for a Prize Novel," he did it to be pleasantly absurd—or was he prophetic of what are not far from facts today? The newly-born advertising industry had undoubtedly discovered the testimonial at the time this skit appeared in *Punch* (about 1850), but we hold to our belief that Mr. Thackeray had in his mind's eye been turning the pages of a modern magazine. That is one of the very nicest things about Thackeray's humour. For the most part it does not date, although fashions in humour have changed greatly since his day. Thackeray was frequently at his best in such brief little skits as this, and we shall have more of them.

CARAN D'ACHE'S METHOD of catching alligators, shown in the GOLDEN BOOK for July, is no laughing matter, it seems. A reader calls our attention to the following New York *Times* account of G. N. Bistany's hunting expedition to Africa:

> A new method is now used for capturing tigers. . . . We engage a gang of natives, who take about fourteen wooden poles and bind them around with cable to make a tunnel. A live dog is then secured in this tunnel, and the whole contraption placed in some jungle trail regularly used by tigers. Sooner or later the animal, prowling in search of food, catches the scent of the dog, is lured into the tunnel and crouches ready to spring on the dog.
>
> As he steps in, however, the dog steps out of the other end, the whole trap closes, and the tiger is a prisoner. He is then carried in the poles to the village, where the natives throw water at him and drive him into a cage.

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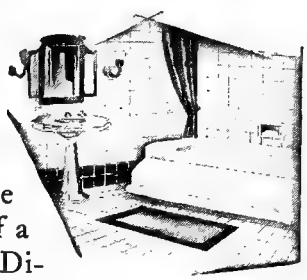
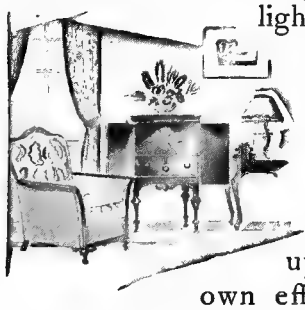
Do You Get the Most Out of Life?

FROM the time you arise in the morning until you go to bed at night you are using the services of vast organizations which contribute to your health, comfort, safety and pleasure. As a modern, civilized, cultured man or woman you are ever alert to see and use every new aid to a fuller life. *Water* runs at the turn of a handle. Directly or indirectly you pay for having that water delivered to you when and where you want it. *Light* appears at the turn of a button. Between you and the source of supply are tons of machinery, copper wire; thousands of poles or conduits. You seldom think of that. It does not occur to you that pipes must be maintained by someone else to carry your fresh water to you, and to carry the waste away. You do not have to *think* about it.



It is the same with your *gas* and your *telephone*. You could never get along without any of them. They are as necessary to you as a roof and a winter coat. The *telegraph* and the *railroads* are just the same. You do not use them as often as you do *electricity* or *water*, but when you want them they are there. Your car is another example—your radio—the very pictures on your wall! You accept these comforts and conveniences as a matter of course. They are the little aids to easy, pleasant living that make us a civilized people.

To civilized Americans like yourself, reading the latest worth while books has become as necessary as pure drinking water. It is part of modern, cultured life. Owning a few of the recognized leading books of the day is just as important as having electric lights in your home. Today it is not necessary for you to rely upon your own efforts for the main-stay of your reading matter. Today the Literary Guild puts one entertaining and specially selected volume of reading matter in your hands every month for *half* what the same books would cost you in the stores.



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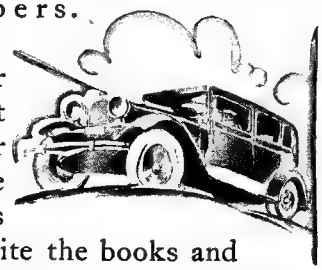

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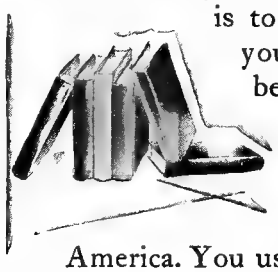

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Authors and Books

THIS BOOK-READING is getting to be a pretty improving business. . . . The books we like best this month have taught us how to comport ourselves with Civil War veterans, World War veterans, Chicago gang war veterans, suburban apartment house veterans, and John D. Rockefeller. . . . For example:

EVELYN SCOTT'S *The Wave* is a panorama of the Civil War as it affected not only soldiers on the eve of battle and generals surrendering their swords, but newsboys and old men and sweethearts and sick old maids, wounded men in jolting ambulances, slaves not yet free, senators, girls in Southern towns captured by the Federals, business men, creoles, Vermont farmers. . . . It is not a novel, but whatever it is, it is magnificent. . . . Making no pretense at a thread of story, Mrs. Scott sweeps along without heroics or climax or pause for heart throbs. . . . The people, the moral code, the moods of the day are as real to you as your own. . . . Sometimes a glimpse will be as long as a short story; sometimes it will be only two laconic paragraphs. . . . There are 625 pages of it, not all interesting, but hardly one could be spared in completing the whole. . . . *The Wave* is the first book to be published by the new firm of Jonathan Cape and Harrison Smith, and is a Literary Guild selection. . . .

Illustration by C. B. Falls for Stevenson's *A Lodging for the Night*, to be brought out by the Limited Editions Club.

FAR MORE THAN just another war book is Erich Maria Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front* (Little, Brown). . . . It overtops such a book as *The Case of Sergeant Grischa* because its scale, like that of Mrs. Scott's *The Wave*, is so gigantic. . . . It is not the story of one man or of one nation. . . . Somehow it manages to be the story of a war and a generation. . . . It is an improvement on the many anecdotal and autobiographical books about the War because of artistic unity and compactness, and the savage bite of its prose. . . . And it brings home the horror of war like the death of a friend. . . . This is, incidentally, the Book-of-the-Month Club choice for June. . . .

SINCE READING *Little Cæsar* we chat lightly with gangmen about packing a heater (carrying a gun), or getting the book for a caper (a life sentence for a murder). . . . The surprising thing about this book of W. R. Burnett's is that there are three hundred-odd pages of this slang set in prose as staccato as the frequent machine-gun fire, and yet it manages to be an excellent novel. . . . Sound characterization and exciting plot are woven into a story of dramatic intensity. . . .

BOOTH TARKINGTON'S *Young Mrs. Greeley* (Doubleday, Doran) is a depressing book, but worth-while. . . . The publisher's cheery "blurb" on the cover calls it "gentle irony" . . . well, it is not our idea of gentle irony. . . . It is a grim and incisive portrait of womankind in a suburban apartment . . . wives who do not grow with their husbands, who are ignorant and resentful of any life but moviegoing, manicuring, giggling association with their kind. . . . Mrs. Greeley is pretty—and we never wanted so much to spank anyone. . . . Mr. Tarkington has been as uncanny in his knowing analysis—and more than as unkind—as in *Alice Adams*. . . . The book is slight; the plot no more than a short story plot, the characters, other than the Hedges and Greeleys, are as stiffly painted as wooden figureheads. . . . But those two married couples are Mr. Tarkington at his serious best. . . .

One of ninety drawings by Daugherty for Shakespeare's *Comedies*.

LIKE THE VERY competent reporter that he is, John K. Winkler has filled in to the minutest detail his *John D.—A Portrait in Oils*. . . . Keeping before our eyes the picture of the whimsical, quirky old man of today—with his wig and all his own teeth, who has had his valet learn to play "Home, Sweet Home" for him on the organ, and who reads aloud at family functions from the first ledger he ever kept—Mr. Winkler rapidly sketches in the Ohio background, the colourful, mysterious quack-doctor father, the upright and forceful mother, the first money made swapping turkeys, the first job, the commission business, the striking of oil, the march toward monopoly, the ladling out of billions—and back again to the old man with his dimes and his platitudes. . . . It is an irreverent book, but so is the American passion for knowing what its household gods eat for breakfast. . . . In spite of a not-very-wide vision of the days when the Rockefeller fortunes came to be, or how they came to be, Mr. Winkler has done a brilliant journalistic job, and compiled a book one cannot lay down. . . . And then there is the dime on the cover for you—if you can pry it off. It is embedded with true Rockefeller (also Vanguard Press) frugality. . . .

TWELVE BEAUTIFULLY printed, illustrated, and bound classics each year are to be distributed to the lucky fifteen hundred who get there first and have the price of The Limited Editions Club. . . . Not that the price is excessive. . . . Ten dollars a volume for these handsome tomes which ought to go up like gilt-edged stocks sounds reasonable enough to us. . . . The books to appear the first year include *Robinson Crusoe, The Decameron, Tartarin of Tarascon, Leaves of Grass* and *Gulliver's Travels*. . . . Among the artists are C. B. Falls, W. A. Dwiggins, Edward A. Wilson, John Held, Jr., and Ruzicka. . . .

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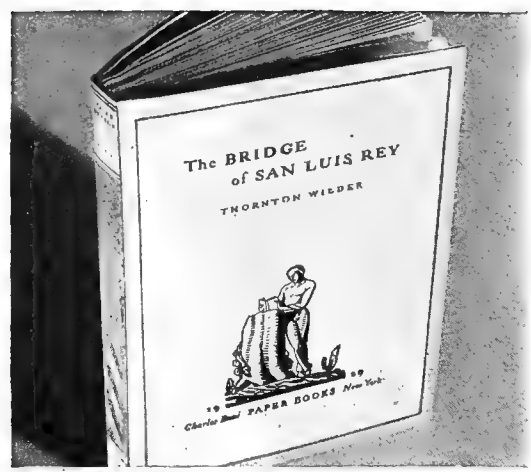

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MAUD DIVER'S NOVELS get better and better, which is certainly one of the nicest things you can say about an author. . . . Her latest, *A Wild Bird* (Houghton Mifflin), is a more difficult and delicate task of portraiture than she has yet tackled, and Eva, who is a truly complicated young person, rewards Mrs. Diver's care by coming very much to life. . . . Mrs. Diver was born in the Himalayas, but she objects to being called a native Indian just for that. She knows India almost as well as Mr. Kipling does. At present she lives in Dorset at a place called Lilliput, from which Dean Swift took the name of Gulliver's little friends. . . . *The Wild Bird* takes her flight from Switzerland to England and at last to India, meeting men and adventure, and battling for her freedom every step of her attractive way. . . .

P. T. BARNUM HAS A successor in Lloyd Lewis, author of *Myths After Lincoln*. . . . Mr. Lewis's book is straight circus—real fun, full of things going on, conglomerate, lowbrow. . . . A mass of brilliantly-spangled material waltzes through the pages to the catchy tune of Mr. Lewis's prose. . . . Some of it represents scholarship, some a nose for news, some an ear for gossip . . . and it is presented three rings at a time. . . . What Mr. Lewis has set out to do is to assemble the stories true and false, and the attitudes ditto which sprang up about Lincoln following his death, and he has done it overwhelmingly. . . . Harcourt, Brace have given it a handsome format. . . .

FRANZ WERFEL'S *Class Reunion* is the bitter and moving story of the persecution of one boy by others at a boys' school. It is a study of unthinking cruelty which results in the ruin of a boy's life, and is done in Mr. Werfel's usual condensed manner. . . . There are only 204 small pages which can—and because of their intensity, almost must—be read at one sitting. . . . One sees the magistrate who was once the ringleader in the disgracing of Adler, the most promising boy in the school. . . . One meets Adler, a shuffling, bald old man, accused of the murder of a prostitute. . . . One follows the magistrate to his class dinner—the epitome of all class dinners—and sees the conviction grow upon him there that Adler the suspected murderer is Adler his old schoolmate—and gradually the consciousness of his own guilt towards Adler unfolds. . . . In hysterical, almost incoherent prose the magistrate writes down the story of his relations with Adler. . . . The book is as masterly a vivisection of boys' school life as we know. . . .

DAVID GARNETT is a favourite of ours, but *No Love*, his latest novel, would have won us even if we had never before heard of the artificer of *Lady into Fox*, *Sailor's Return*, and *Go She Must*. . . . *No Love* is a real novel, with a few well-drawn characters against a charming island background. . . . It is a story of the friendship of Simon and Benedict, which survives the growing-up process, different careers, and the war—but not love. . . . Mr. Garnett is past master of the artistry which looks like simplicity; he says what he has to say quietly, and it sinks gently deep into your mind because he has also said it almost perfectly. This is a Knopf book. . . .

Jacket design for *The Week-End Library*

EDEN AND CEDAR PAUL have done an excellent piece of work in their translation of *Karl Marx: His Life and Work*, from the German of Otto Rühle (the Viking Press). . . . This is, so far as we know, the first comprehensive and authoritative biography of Marx since John Spargo's book in 1910. The Rühle volume is good red meat, written by a German journalist-scholar-Social Democrat. It is not easy reading, and it presupposes a knowledge of European history, Hegelianism, social science, and like matters; but it should be an essential volume for one who would have a better understanding of the man indirectly responsible for the famous five days in Russia, in 1917, which shook the world. . . .

DOUBLEDAY, DORAN HAS a splendid idea in its annual *Week-End Library*. . . . In one fat tome of a thousand pages are two novels, many short stories, three plays, poetry, essays, and humorous verse—ranging in authors from Elinor Wylie and Joseph Conrad to Edgar Wallace and Don Herold. . . . If you don't like some of it at least, you had probably better stay at home anyway. . . .

"PHARAOH? HUH. That's dried codfish," grunted the customs inspector presented with a 100 per cent. antique mummy. . . . Or so we read in Julius Klein's *Frontiers of Trade*, and the distinguished Assistant Secretary of Commerce would not toy with us, we are sure. . . . It seems that a duty on Pharaohs has never been definitely set, and it looked as though this particular one would have to go back to Egypt—until a bright inspector thought of the dried codfish category. . . . We wonder if it takes a Pharaoh to pass as a dried codfish—or can anybody do it?

WHEN ANATOLE FRANCE went to South America in 1909 to deliver the lectures on Rabelais which make up the volume *Rabelais* (just translated by Ernest Boyd and published by Henry Holt) the Bishops denounced both the lecturer and his subject, and the first of the lectures was delivered to an empty hall. . . . Anatole France, however, was too

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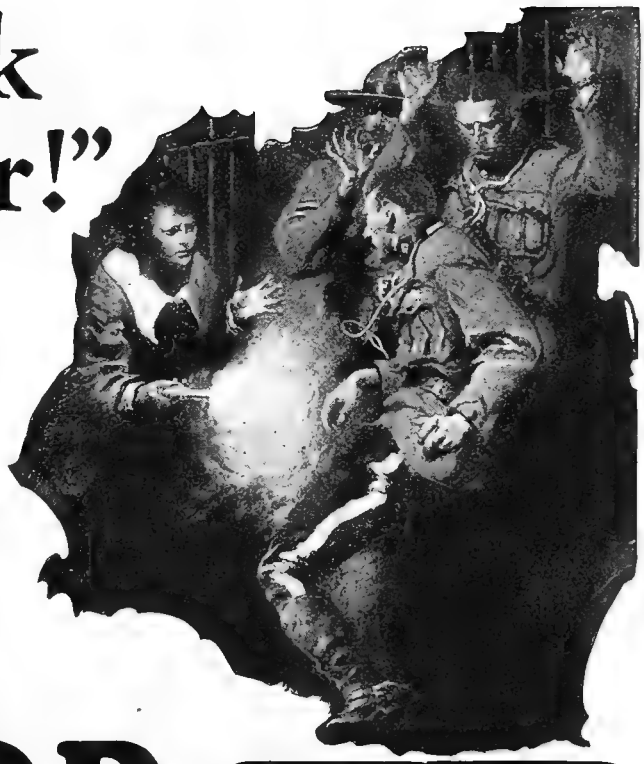
"*Quick!* Unlock that Door!"



A MOMENT of hesitation—then from Marette's slim black revolver there leaped a spurt of smoke and flame.

The special constable lurched back against the cell bars as the others stood bewildered before the sudden fury of this girl; while behind the locked door Jim Kent watched in tense silence, every nerve alert, every drop of blood in his body on fire.

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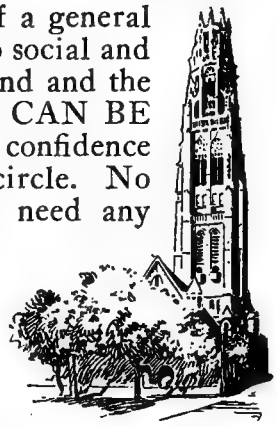

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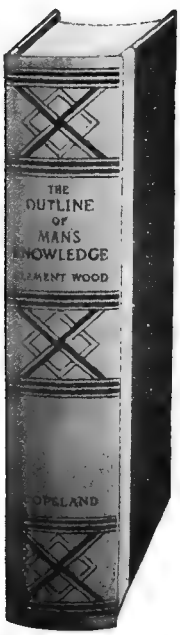

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short-sighted to realize that anything was wrong until the end of his talk, when he waited in vain for the applause. . . . Yet in spite of the charges of impropriety that have been leveled at both Rabelais and Anatole France, the book (by Anatole France about Rabelais) is almost excessively proper. . . . France may have been thinking of the South American bishops when he prepared his lectures, or, more likely, he failed to discuss and appraise the famous Rabelaisian humour because he found it so alien to his own light rapier thrust. . . . But with Rabelais the scholar and humanist, the satirist and skeptic, France had much in common, and deals with understanding sympathy. . . . And then of course there is the way in which the book is written. . . . If Anatole France were writing it, even a time-table would be clear and charming. . . .

As inevitable a way as we can think of to get children started reading Shakespeare would be to present them with Harcourt, Brace's new edition of the three comedies—*The Merchant of Venice, The Tempest,* and *As You Like It*—in one beautifully illustrated volume. . . . That is, we assume it is beautifully illustrated. . . . The ninety drawings are by James Daugherty, and the several we have seen are utterly engaging and appropriate. . . . The book is not quite out yet. We'll try to remember to remind you of it again when it really appears. . . .

Frankly, we don't see why all the fuss was made about Norah James' *Sleeveless Errand* (Morrow). . . . It certainly is not bad enough (for all its realism and liberal sprinkling of strong language) for London to suppress. . . . nor artistically good enough for America to embrace, just because London suppressed it. . . . It is a story of that decadent post-war London you hear so much about . . . . a brilliant and somewhat facile portrait of neurotics—for Bill, the one "normal" person in it, has not the flesh-and-blood of a sofa pillow . . . . Occasional spots are sensitive and moving, as though they alone had come from deep down in the author's feeling and thinking about the problem of these nerve-racked souls fleeing their futile lives. . . .

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IF WE GOT ANY OF your hopes up too soon about *Pollyanna's Western Adventure,* we apologize . . . this latest volume in the *Glad* Series, which has been carried on since Eleanor H. Porter's death by Harriet Lummis Smith, is not due until September, when L. C. Page publish it. . . .

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TWO IMPORTANT BIOGRAPHIES of the fall will be *Up to Now* by Alfred E. Smith (that may not be the title, but you get the idea. . . . Our choice was the suggested *The Name Is Smith*) to be published by the Viking Press . . . and *King George V,* by Sir George Arthur, to be published by Jonathan Cape and Harrison Smith. . . . They ought to look well side by side on the bookshelf. . . .

WELL, WE MUST go and do the chores.

F. F.

Recommended Books

Fiction

ALL QUIET ON THE WESTERN FRONT, by Erich Maria Remarque. Little Brown. $2.50. A stark, engrossing vision of the War, through the clear eyes of one who at 20, as a German foot-soldier, knew all of its awfulness. Without animosity he dwells on the pitiful physical side of the conflict, and its aftermath for those whom it destroyed but did not take.

STRANGE MOON, by T. S. Stribling. Doubleday, Doran. $2. An American engineer runs the gamut of adventure in the oil country of Venezuela. An incredible, amusing, and excellent yarn.

THE INNOCENT VOYAGE, by Richard Hughes. Harpers. $2.50. A group of children are dispatched from the West Indies to England on a sailing vessel. Captured by pirates, they run the gamut of melodramatic adventure in tropic seas. Under the whimsical surface lies the author's depth of human understanding, and his delight in juggling emotions, events, and destinies.

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KARL MARX, by Otto Rühle. Viking. $5. The biographer shows the great Socialist as a very human, unself-reliant individual, who with all his brilliant mind could never support himself. Besides the story of Marx's stony career, there is given a keen analysis of his doctrines.

FOCH SPEAKS. by Major Charles Bugnet. Lincoln MacVeagh (The Dial Press). $3. A sympathetic, sharply-defined portrait of the Generalissimo, by a man who knew him intimately. In many of the passages the Marshal's own words are preserved. He was a man—wise, kind, and strong.

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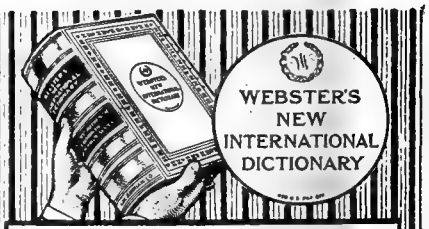

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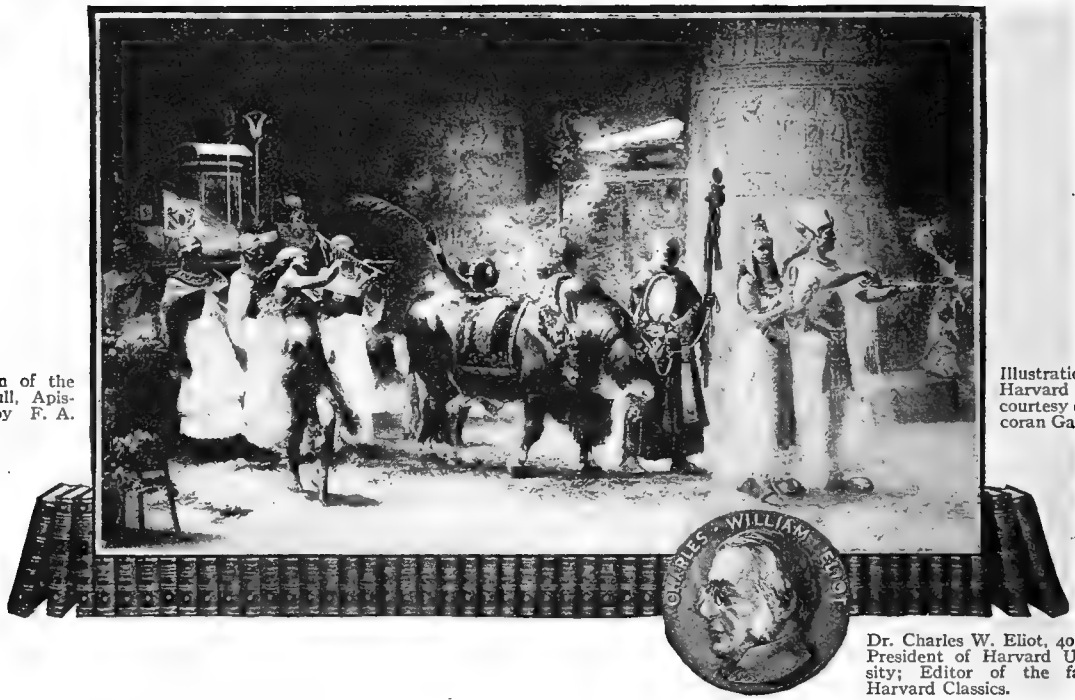

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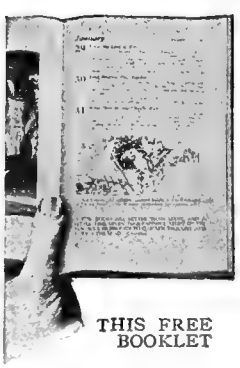

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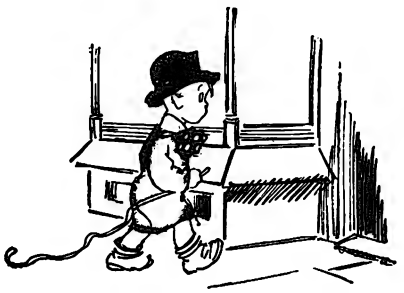
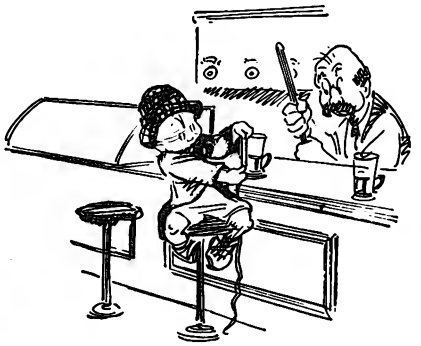
Skippy Buys a Soda

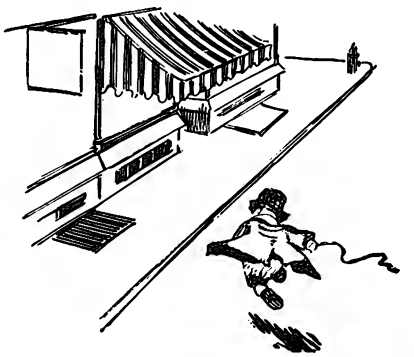
By PERCY L. CROSBY



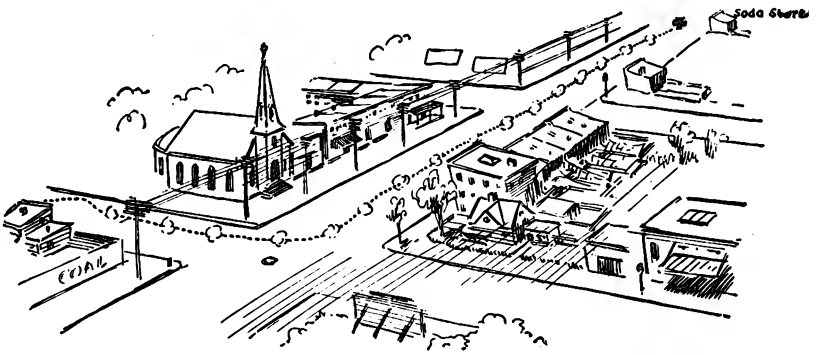
"At last, I got a tape measure."



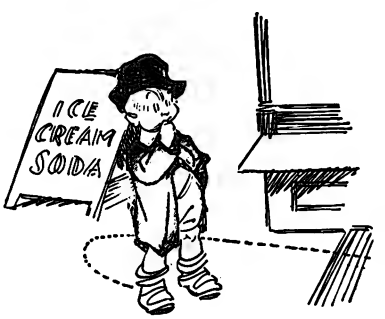
"Five inches."



"Four and one-half inches."



"Seven inches!"



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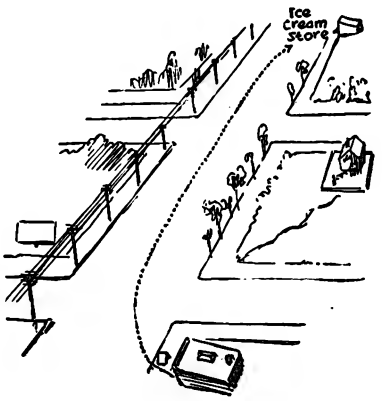
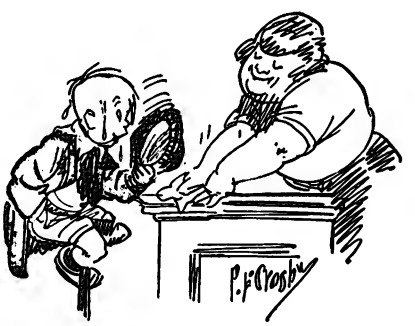


"Three inches!"



"Choc'late soda—extra sweet!"

From *Skippy* (Greenberg, Publisher)

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Woodcut by Heistand Miller

August

THIS IS THE MONTH when all life reaches its maximum, its summit, and when as yet the decline of autumn has not begun. The very landscape trembles in an ecstasy of accomplishment—an exquisite consciousness of perfection. Nature breathes her love upon the earth in ardent heat. The birds are silent, as if awed beyond utterance; a little while ago a vireo tried to set up his monotonous work-a-day song, as if knowing that his is as little irreverential as any song could be, but it fluttered away and died. Only the unabashed cicada translates the heat and the tremor of earth and air into a long ecstatic thrill. This is the time when the poet or the philosopher, if he be of those who have been admitted to the secret of Nature, may hear her very heart-beat—not in fancy at all, but in sober truth. . . . Animal life is very quiet now. If the birds still make love, they do not chatter about it. The squirrels have some running to do, but they do it silently. All manner of queer insect life is exuberant and interesting. . . .

The August night passes in happy waking that one would not exchange for sleep. With the rising of the sun, its coolness, the one premonition of autumn and of dying, takes to flight, and the living heat comes on apace. A few birds sing faintly in the cool of the dawn; but presently the hawk, screaming high above the clearing, has uttered the real keynote of the August day. It is not a time of gentle, modest melodies, nor of soft, venturing life, but of high tones, and of all things strong, complete, full-grown, and bold.

JOSEPH EDGAR CHAMBERLIN.

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The Golden Book Magazine

VOLUME X AUGUST, 1929 NUMBER 56

By O. HENRY

One Dollar's Worth

Sydney Porter

Linoleum Cuts by
Harvey A. Van Valkenburgh

THE JUDGE OF THE United States court of the district lying along the Rio Grande border found the following letter one morning in his mail:

JUDGE:

When you sent me up for four years you made a talk. Among other hard things, you called me a rattlesnake. Maybe I am one—anyhow, you hear me rattling now. One year after I got to the pen, my daughter died of—well, they said it was poverty and the disgrace together. You've got a daughter, Judge, and I'm going to make you know how it feels to lose one. And I'm going to bite that district attorney that spoke against me. I'm free now, and I guess I've turned to rattlesnake all right. I feel like one. I don't say much, but this is my rattle. Look out when I strike.

Yours respectfully,

RATTLESNAKE.

Judge Derwent threw the letter carelessly aside. It was nothing new to receive such epistles from desperate men whom he had been called upon to judge. He felt no alarm. Later on he showed the letter to Littlefield, the young district attorney, for Littlefield's name was included in the threat, and the judge was punctilious in matters between himself and his fellowmen.

Littlefield honoured the rattle of the writer, so far as it concerned himself, with a smile of contempt; but he frowned a little over the reference to the Judge's daughter, for he and Nancy Derwent were to be married in the fall.

Littlefield went to the clerk of the court and looked over the records with him. They decided that the letter might have been sent by Mexico Sam, a half-breed border desperado who had been imprisoned for manslaughter four years before. Then official duties crowded the matter from his mind, and the rattle of the revengeful serpent was forgotten.

Court was in session at Brownsville. Most of the cases to be tried were charges of smuggling, counterfeiting, post-office robberies, and violations of Federal laws along the border. One case was that of a young Mexican, Rafael Ortiz, who had been rounded up by a clever deputy marshal in the act of passing a counterfeit silver dollar. He had been suspected of many such deviations from rectitude, but this was the first time that anything provable had been fixed upon him. Ortiz languished cozily in jail, smoking brown cigarettes and waiting for trial. Kilpatrick, the deputy, brought the counterfeit dollar and handed it to the district attorney in his office in the court-house. The deputy and a reputable druggist were prepared to swear that Ortiz paid for a bottle of medicine with it. The coin was a poor counterfeit, soft, dull-looking, and made principally of lead. It was the day before the morning on which the docket would reach the case of Ortiz, and the district attorney was preparing himself for trial.

"Not much need of having in high-priced experts to prove the coin's queer, is there, Kil?" smiled Littlefield, as he thumped the dollar down upon the table, where it fell with no more ring than would have come from a lump of putty.

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"I guess the Greaser's as good as behind the bars," said the deputy, easing up his holsters. "You've got him dead. If it had been just one time, these Mexicans can't tell good money from bad; but this little yaller rascal belongs to a gang of counterfeiters, I know. This is the first time I've been able to catch him doing the trick. He's got a girl down there in them Mexican jacals on the river bank. I seen her one day when I was watching him. She's as pretty as a red heifer in a flower bed."

Joya Treviñas

Littlefield shoved the counterfeit dollar into his pocket, and slipped his memoranda of the case into an envelope. Just then a bright, winsome face, as frank and jolly as a boy's, appeared in the doorway, and in walked Nancy Derwent.

"Oh, Bob, didn't court adjourn at twelve today until tomorrow?" she asked of Littlefield.

"It did," said the district attorney, "and I'm very glad of it. I've got a lot of rulings to look up, and——"

"Now, that's just like you. I wonder you and father don't turn to law books or rulings or something! I want you to take me out plover-shooting this afternoon. Long Prairie is just alive with them. Don't say no, please! I want to try my new twelve-bore hammerless. I've sent to the livery stable to engage Fly and Bess for the buckboard; they stand fire so nicely. I was sure you would go."

They were to be married in the fall. The glamour was at its height. The plovers won the day—or, rather, the afternoon—over the calf-bound authorities. Littlefield began to put his papers away.

There was a knock at the door. Kilpatrick answered it. A beautiful, dark-eyed girl with a skin tinged with the faintest lemon colour walked into the room. A black shawl was thrown over her head and wound once around her neck.

She began to talk in Spanish, a voluble, mournful stream of melancholy music. Littlefield did not understand Spanish. The deputy did, and he translated her talk by portions, at intervals holding up his hands to check the flow of her words.

"She came to see you, Mr. Littlefield. Her name's Joya Treviñas. She wants to see you about—well, she's mixed up with that Rafael Ortiz. She's his—she's his girl. She says he's innocent. She says she made the money and got him to pass it. Don't you believe her, Mr. Littlefield. That's the way with these Mexican girls; they'll lie, steal, or kill for a sweetheart. Never trust a woman that's in love!"

"Mr. Kilpatrick! How can you say such a thing?"

Nancy Derwent's indignant exclamation caused the deputy to flounder for a moment in attempting to explain that he had misquoted his own sentiments, and then he went on with the translation:

"She says she's willing to take his place in the jail if you'll let him out. She says she was down sick with the fever, and the doctor said she'd die if she didn't have medicine. That's why he passed the lead dollar on the drug store. She says it saved her life. This Rafael seems to be her honey, all right; there's a lot of stuff in her talk about love and such things that you don't want to hear."

It was an old story to the district attorney.

"Tell her," said he, "that I can do nothing. The case comes up in the morning, and he will have to make his fight before the court."

Nancy Derwent was not so hardened. She was looking with sympathetic interest at Joya Treviñas and at Littlefield alternately. The deputy repeated the district attorney's words to the girl. She spoke a sentence or two in a low voice, pulled her shawl closely about her face, and left the room.

"What did she say then?" asked Littlefield.

"Nothing special," said the deputy. "She said: 'If the life of the one'—let's see how it went—'*Si la vida de ella á quien tu amas*—if the life of the girl you love is ever in danger, remember Rafael Ortiz.'"

Kilpatrick strolled out through the corridor in the direction of the marshal's office.

"CAN'T YOU DO ANYTHING for them, Bob?" asked Nancy. "It's such a little thing—just one counterfeit dollar—to ruin the happiness of two lives! She was in danger of death, and he did it to save her. Doesn't the law know the feeling of pity?"

"It hasn't a place in jurisprudence, Nan," said Littlefield, "especially *in re* the district attorney's duty. I'll promise you that the prosecution will not be vindictive; but the man is as good as convicted when the case is called. Witnesses will swear to his passing the bad dollar which I have in my pocket at this moment as 'Exhibit A.' There are no Mexicans on the jury, and it will vote Mr. Greaser guilty without leaving the box."

* * *

The plover-shooting was fine that afternoon, and in the excitement of the sport the case of Rafael and the grief of Joya Treviñas were forgotten. The

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district attorney and Nancy Derwent drove out from the town three miles along a smooth, grassy road, and then struck across a rolling prairie toward a heavy line of timber on Piedra Creek. Beyond this creek lay Long Prairie, the favourite haunt of the plover. As they were nearing the creek they heard the galloping of a horse to their right, and saw a man with black hair and a swarthy face riding toward the woods at a tangent, as if he had come up behind them.

"I've seen that fellow somewhere," said Littlefield, who had a memory for faces, "but I can't exactly place him. Some ranchman, I suppose, taking a short-cut home."

They spent an hour on Long Prairie, shooting from the buckboard. Nancy Derwent, an active, outdoor Western girl, was pleased with her twelve-bore. She had bagged within two brace of her companion's score.

They started homeward at a gentle trot. When within a hundred yards of Piedra Creek a man rode out of the timber directly toward them.

"It looks like the man we saw coming over," remarked Miss Derwent.

As the distance between them lessened, the district attorney suddenly pulled up his team sharply, with his eyes fixed upon the advancing horseman. That individual had drawn a Winchester from its scabbard on his saddle and thrown it over his arm.

"Now I know you, Mexico Sam!" muttered Littlefield to himself. "It *was* you who shook your rattles in that gentle epistle."

Mexico Sam did not leave things long in doubt. He had a nice eye in all matters relating to firearms, so when he was within good rifle range, but outside of danger from No. 8 shot, he threw up his Winchester and opened fire upon the occupants of the buckboard.

The first shot cracked the back of the seat within the two-inch space between the shoulders of Littlefield and Miss Derwent. The next went through the dashboard and Littlefield's trouser leg.

Rattlesnake

The district attorney hustled Nancy out of the buckboard to the ground. She was a little pale, but asked no questions. She had the frontier instinct that accepts conditions in an emergency without superfluous argument. They kept their guns in hand, and Littlefield hastily gathered some handfuls of cartridges from the pasteboard box on the seat and crowded them into his pockets.

"Keep behind the horses, Nan," he commanded. "That fellow is a ruffian I sent to prison once. He's trying to get even. He knows our shot won't hurt him at that distance."

"All right, Bob," said Nancy steadily. "I'm not afraid. But you come close, too. Whoa, Bess; stand still, now!"

She stroked Bess's mane. Littlefield stood with his gun ready, praying that the desperado would come within range.

But Mexico Sam was playing his vendetta along safe lines. He was a bird of different feather from the plover. His accurate eye drew an imaginary line of circumference around the area of danger from bird-shot, and upon this line he rode. His horse wheeled to the right, and as his victims rounded to the safe side of their equine breastwork he sent a ball through the district attorney's hat. Once he miscalculated in making a détour, and overstepped his margin. Littlefield's gun flashed, and Mexico Sam ducked his head to the harmless patter of the shot. A few of them stung his horse, which pranced promptly back to the safety line.

The desperado fired again. A little cry came from Nancy Derwent. Littlefield whirled, with blazing eyes, and saw the blood trickling down her cheek.

"I'm not hurt, Bob—only a splinter struck me. I think he hit one of the wheel-spokes."

"Lord!" groaned Littlefield. "If I only had a charge of buck-shot!"

The ruffian got his horse still, and took careful aim. Fly gave a snort and fell in the harness, struck in the neck. Bess, now disabused of the idea that plover were being fired at, broke her traces and galloped wildly away. Mexico Sam sent a ball neatly through the fulness of Nancy Derwent's shooting jacket.

"Lie down—lie down!" snapped Littlefield. "Close to the horse—flat on the ground—so." He almost threw her upon the grass against the back of the recumbent Fly. Oddly enough, at that moment the words of the Mexican girl returned to his mind.

"If the life of the girl you love is ever in danger, remember Rafael Ortiz."

Littlefield uttered an exclamation.

"Open fire on him, Nan, across the horse's back! Fire as fast as you can! You can't hurt him, but keep

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him dodging shot for one minute while I try to work a little scheme."

Nancy gave a quick glance at Littlefield, and saw him take out his pocket-knife and open it. Then she turned her face to obey orders, keeping up a rapid fire at the enemy.

Mexico Sam waited patiently until this innocuous fusillade ceased. He had plenty of time, and he did not care to risk the chance of a bird-shot in his eye when it could be avoided by a little caution. He pulled his heavy Stetson low down over his face until the shots ceased. Then he drew a little nearer, and fired with careful aim at what he could see of his victims above the fallen horse. Neither of them moved. He urged his horse a few steps nearer. He saw the district attorney rise to one knee and deliberately level his shotgun. He pulled his hat down and awaited the harmless rattle of the tiny pellets.

The shotgun blazed with a heavy report. Mexico Sam sighed, turned limp all over, and slowly fell from his horse—a dead rattlesnake.

* * *

At ten o'clock the next morning court opened, and the case of the United States *versus* Rafael Ortiz was called. The district attorney, with his arm in a sling, rose and addressed the court.

"May it please your honour," he said, "I desire to enter a *nolle pros.* in this case. Even though the defendant should be guilty, there is not sufficient evidence in the hands of the government to secure a conviction. The piece of counterfeit coin upon the identity of which the case was built is not now available as evidence. I ask, therefore, that the case be stricken off." At the noon recess Kilpatrick strolled into the district attorney's office.

"I've just been down to take a squint at old Mexico Sam," said the deputy. "They've got him laid out. Old Mexico was a tough outfit, I reckon. The boys was wonderin' down there what you shot him with. Some said it must have been nails. I never see a gun carry anything to make holes like he had."

"I shot him," said the district attorney, "with 'Exhibit A' of your counterfeiting case. Lucky thing for me—and somebody else—that it was as bad money as it was! It sliced up into slugs very nicely. Say, Kil, can't you go down to the jacals and find where that Mexican girl lives? Miss Derwent wants to know."

Time, You Old Gypsy Man

By RALPH HODGSON

Time, you old gypsy man,
Will you not stay,
Put up your caravan
Just for one day?

All things I'll give you
Will you be my guest,
Bells for your jennet
Of silver the best,
Goldsmiths shall beat you
A great golden ring,
Peacocks shall bow to you,
Little boys sing.
Oh, and sweet girls will
Festoon you with may.
Time, you old gypsy,
Why hasten away?
Last week in Babylon,
Last night in Rome,
Morning, and in the crush
Under Paul's dome;
Under Paul's dial
You tighten your rein—
Only a moment,
And off once again;
Off to some city
Now blind in the womb,
Off to another
Ere that's in the tomb.

Time, you old gypsy man,
Will you not stay,
Put up your caravan
Just for one day?

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By KATHARINE BRUSH

Drawings by James Reid

Night Club

Katharine Brush

PROMPTLY AT QUARTER OF TEN P. M. Mrs. Brady descended the steps of the Elevated. She purchased from the newsdealer in the cubby-hole beneath them a next month's magazine and a tomorrow morning's paper, and, with these tucked under one plump arm, she walked. She walked two blocks north on Sixth Avenue; turned and went west. But not far west. Westward half a block only, to the place where the gay green awning marked "Club Français" painted a stripe of shade across the glimmering sidewalk. Under this awning Mrs. Brady halted briefly, to remark to the six-foot doorman that it looked like rain and to await the performance of his professional duty. When the small green door yawned open, she sighed deeply and plodded in.

The foyer was a blackness, an airless velvet blackness like the inside of a jeweler's box. Four drum-shaped lamps of golden silk suspended from the ceiling gave it light (a very little) and formed the jewels: gold signets, those, or cuff-links for a giant. At the far end of the foyer there were black stairs, faintly dusty, rippling upward toward an amber radiance. Mrs. Brady approached and ponderously mounted the stairs, clinging with one fist to the mangy velvet rope that railed their edge.

From the top, Miss Lena Levin observed the ascent. Miss Levin was the check-room girl. She had dark-at-the-roots blonde hair and slender hips upon which, in moments of leisure, she wore her hands, like buckles of ivory loosely attached. This was a moment of leisure. Miss Levin waited behind her counter. Row upon row of hooks, empty as yet, and seeming to beckon—wee curved fingers of iron—waited behind her.

"Late," said Miss Levin, "again."

"Go wan!" said Mrs. Brady. "It's only ten to ten. *Whew!* Them *stairs!*"

She leaned heavily, sideways, against Miss Levin's counter, and, applying one palm to the region of her heart, appeared at once to listen and to count. "Feel!" she cried then in a pleased voice.

Miss Levin obediently felt.

"Them stairs," continued Mrs. Brady darkly, "with my bad heart will be the death of me. Whew! Well, dearie? What's the news?"

"You got a paper," Miss Levin languidly reminded her.

"Yeah!" agreed Mrs. Brady with sudden vehemence. "I got a paper!" She slapped it upon the counter. "An' a lot of time I'll get to *read* my paper, won't I now? On a Saturday night!" She moaned. "Other nights is bad enough, dear knows—but *Saturday* nights! How I dread 'em! Every Saturday night I say to my daughter, I say, 'Geraldine, I can't,' I say, 'I can't go through it again, an' that's all there is to it,' I say. 'I'll *quit!*' I say. An' I *will,* too!" added Mrs. Brady firmly, if indefinitely.

Miss Levin, in defense of Saturday nights, mumbled some vague something about tips.

"Tips!" Mrs. Brady hissed it. She almost spat it. Plainly money was nothing, nothing at all, to this lady. "I just wish," said Mrs. Brady, and glared at Miss Levin, "I just wish *you* had to spend one Saturday night, just one, in that dressing room! Bein' pushed an' stepped on and near knocked down by that gang of hussies, an' them orderin' and bossin' you 'round like you was *black,* an' usin' your things an' then sayin' they're sorry they got no change, they'll be back. Yah! They *never* come back!"

"There's Mr. Costello," whispered Miss Levin through lips that, like a ventriloquist's, scarcely stirred.

"An' as I was sayin'," Mrs. Brady said at once brightly, "I got to leave you. Ten to ten, time I was on the job."

She smirked at Miss Levin, nodded, and right-about-faced. There, indeed, Mr. Costello was. Mr. Billy Costello, manager, proprietor, monarch of all he surveyed. From the doorway of the big room, where the little tables herded in a ring around the waxen floor, he surveyed Mrs. Brady, and in such a way that Mrs. Brady, momentarily forgetting her bad heart, walked fast, scurried faster, almost ran.

The door of her domain was set politely in an alcove, beyond silken curtains looped up at the sides. Mrs.

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Brady reached it breathless, shouldered it open, and groped for the electric switch. Lights sprang up, a bright white blaze, intolerable for an instant to the eyes, like sun on snow. Blinking, Mrs. Brady shut the door.

The room was a spotless, white-tiled place, half beauty shop, half dressing room. Along one wall stood washstands, sturdy triplets in a row, with pale-green liquid soap in glass balloons afloat above them. Against the opposite wall there was a couch. A third wall backed an elongated glass-topped dressing table; and over the dressing table and over the washstands long rectangular sheets of mirror reflected lights, doors, glossy tiles, lights multiplied. . . .

Mrs. Brady moved across this glitter like a thick dark cloud in a hurry. At the dressing table she came to a halt, and upon it she laid her newspaper, her magazine, and her purse—a black purse worn gray with much clutching. She divested herself of a rusty black coat and a hat of the mushroom persuasion, and hung both up in a corner cupboard which she opened by means of one of a quite preposterous bunch of keys. From a nook in the cupboard she took down a lace-edged handkerchief with long streamers. She untied the streamers and tied them again around her chunky black alpaca waist. The handkerchief became an apron's baby cousin.

Mrs. Brady relocked the cupboard door, fumbled her key-ring over, and unlocked a capacious drawer of the dressing table. She spread a fresh towel on the plate-glass top, in the geometrical centre, and upon the towel she arranged with care a procession of things fished from the drawer. Things for the hair. Things for the complexion. Things for the eyes, the lashes, the brows, the lips, and the fingernails. Things in boxes and things in jars and things in tubes and tins. Also, an ash tray, matches, pins, a tiny sewing kit, a pair of scissors. Last of all, a hand-printed sign, a nudging sort of sign:

> NOTICE!
> These articles, placed here for your convenience, are the property of the *maid.*

And directly beneath the sign, propping it up against the looking-glass, a china saucer, in which Mrs. Brady now slyly laid decoy money: two quarters and two dimes, in four-leaf-clover formation.

Another drawer of the dressing table yielded a bottle of bromo seltzer, a bottle of aromatic spirits of ammonia, a tin of sodium bicarbonate, and a teaspoon. These were lined up on a shelf above the couch.

Mrs. Brady was now ready for anything. And (from the grim, thin pucker of her mouth) expecting it.

Music came to her ears. Rather, the beat of music, muffled, rhythmic, remote. *Umpa-um, umpa-um, umpa-um-umm*—Mr. "Fiddle" Baer and his band, hard at work on the first fox-trot of the night. It was teasing, foot-tapping music; but the large solemn feet of Mrs. Brady were still. She sat on the couch and opened her newspaper; and for some moments she read uninterruptedly, with special attention to the murders, divorces, breaches of promise, and funnies.

Then the door swung inward, admitting a blast of Mr. "Fiddle" Baer's best, a whiff of perfume, and a girl.

Mrs. Brady put her paper away.

The girl was *petite* and darkly beautiful; wrapped in fur and mounted on tall jeweled heels. She entered humming the ragtime song the orchestra was playing, and while she stood near the dressing table, stripping off her gloves, she continued to hum it softly to herself:

> "Oh, I know my baby loves me,
> I can tell my baby loves me."

Here the dark little girl got the left glove off, and Mrs. Brady glimpsed a platinum wedding ring.

> "'Cause there ain't no maybe
> In my baby's
> Eyes."

The right glove came off. The dark little girl sat down in one of the chairs that faced the dressing table. She doffed her wrap, casting it carelessly over the chair back. It had a cloth-of-gold lining, and "Paris" was embroidered in curlicues on the label. Mrs. Brady hovered solicitously near.

The dark little girl, still humming, looked over the articles "placed here for your convenience," and picked up the scissors. Having cut off a very small hangnail with the air of one performing a perilous major operation, she seized and used the manicure buffer, and after that the eyebrow pencil. Mrs. Brady's mind, hopefully calculating the tip, jumped and jumped again like a taximeter.

> "Oh, I know my baby loves me——"

The dark little girl applied powder and lipstick belonging to herself. She examined the result searchingly in the mirror and sat back, satisfied. She cast some silver *Klink! Klink!* into Mrs. Brady's saucer, and half rose. Then, remembering something, she settled down again.

The ensuing thirty seconds were spent by her in pulling off her platinum wedding ring, tying it in a corner of a lace handkerchief, and tucking the handkerchief down the bodice of her tight white velvet gown.

"There!" she said.

She swooped up her wrap and trotted toward the door, jeweled heels merrily twinkling.

> "'Cause there ain't no maybe——"

The door fell shut.

Almost instantly it opened again, and another girl came in. A blonde, this. She was pretty in a round-eyed, babyish way; but Mrs. Brady, regarding her, mentally grabbed the spirits of ammonia bottle. For she looked terribly ill. The round eyes were dull, the pretty, silly little face was drawn. The thin hands, picking at the fastenings of a specious beaded bag, trembled and twitched.

Mrs. Brady cleared her throat. "Can I do something for you, miss?"

Evidently the blonde girl had believed herself alone in the dressing room. She started violently and glanced up, panic in her eyes. Panic, and something

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else. Something very like murderous hate—but for an instant only, so that Mrs. Brady, whose perceptions were never quick, missed it altogether.

"A glass of water?" suggested Mrs. Brady.

"No," said the girl, "no." She had one hand in the beaded bag now. Mrs. Brady could see it moving, causing the bag to squirm like a live thing, and the fringe to shiver. "Yes!" she cried abruptly. "A glass of water—please—you get it for me."

She dropped on to the couch. Mrs. Brady scurried to the water cooler in the corner, pressed the spigot with a determined thumb. Water trickled out thinly. Mrs. Brady pressed harder, and scowled, and thought, "Something's wrong with this thing. I mustn't forget, next time I see Mr. Costello——"

When again she faced her patient, the patient was sitting erect. She was thrusting her clenched hand back into the beaded bag again.

She took only a sip of the water, but it seemed to help her quite miraculously. Almost at once colour came to her cheeks, life to her eyes. She grew young again—as young as she was. She smiled up at Mrs. Brady.

"Well!" she exclaimed. "What do you know about that!" She shook her honey-coloured head. "I can't imagine what came over me."

"Are you better now?" inquired Mrs. Brady.

"Yes. Oh, yes. I'm better now. You see," said the blonde girl confidentially, "we were at the theatre, my boy friend and I, and it was hot and stuffy—I guess that must have been the trouble." She paused, and the ghost of her recent distress crossed her face. "God! I thought that last act *never* would end!" she said.

While she attended to her hair and complexion, she chattered gaily to Mrs. Brady, chattered on with scarcely a stop for breath, and laughed much. She said, among other things, that she and her "boy friend" had not known one another very long, but that she was "ga-ga" about him. "He is about me, too," she confessed. "He thinks I'm grand."

She fell silent then, and in the looking-glass her eyes were shadowed, haunted. But Mrs. Brady, from where she stood, could not see the looking-glass; and half a minute later the blonde girl laughed and began again. When she went out she seemed to dance out on little winged feet; and Mrs. Brady, sighing, thought it must be nice to be young . . . and happy like that.

The next arrivals were two. A tall, extremely smart young woman in black chiffon entered first, and held the door open for her companion; and the instant the door was shut, she said, as though it had been on the tip of her tongue for hours, "Amy, what under the sun *happened?*".

Amy, who was brown eyes, brown-bobbed-haired, and patently annoyed about something, crossed to the dressing table and flopped into a chair before she made reply.

"Nothing," she said wearily then.

"That's nonsense!" snorted the other. "Tell me. Was it something she said? She's a tactless ass, of course. Always was."

"No, not anything she said. It was——" Amy bit her lip. "All right! I'll tell you. Before we left your apartment I just happened to notice that Tom had disappeared. So I went to look for him—I wanted to ask him if he'd remembered to tell the maid where we were going—Skippy's subject to croup, you know, and we always leave word. Well, so I went into the kitchen, thinking Tom might be there mixing cocktails—and there he was—and there *she* was!"

The full red mouth of the other young woman pursed itself slightly. Her arched brows lifted. "Well?"

Her matter-of-factness appeared to infuriate Amy. "He was *kissing* her!" she flung out.

"Well?" said the other again. She chuckled softly and patted Amy's shoulder, as if it were the shoulder of a child. "You're surely not going to let *that* spoil your whole evening? Amy *dear!* Kissing may once have been serious and significant—but it isn't nowadays. Nowadays, it's like shaking hands. It means nothing."

But Amy was not consoled. "I hate her!" she cried desperately. "Red-headed *thing!* Calling me 'darling' and 'honey,' and s-sending me handkerchiefs for C-Christmas—and then sneaking off behind closed doors and k-kissing my h-h-husband . . ."

At this point Amy quite broke down, but she recovered herself sufficiently to add with venom, "I'd like to slap her!"

"Oh, oh, oh," smiled the tall young woman, "I wouldn't do that!"

The sweetheart of a Most Distinguished Name.

Amy wiped her eyes with what might well have been one of the Christmas handkerchiefs, and confronted her friend. "Well, what *would* you do, Claire? If you were I?"

"I'd forget it," said Claire, "and have a good time. I'd kiss somebody myself. You've no idea how much better you'd feel!"

"I don't do——" Amy began indignantly; but as the door behind her

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opened and a third young woman—red-headed, earringed, exquisite—lilted in, she changed her tone. "Oh, hello!" she called sweetly, beaming at the newcomer via the mirror. "We were wondering what had become of you!"

The red-headed girl, smiling easily back, dropped her cigarette on the floor and crushed it out with a silver-shod toe. "Tom and I were talking to 'Fiddle' Baer," she explained. "He's going to play 'Clap Yo' Hands' next, because it's my favourite. Lend me a comb, will you, somebody?"

"There's a comb there," said Claire, indicating Mrs. Brady's business comb.

"But imagine using it!" murmured the red-headed girl. "Amy, darling, haven't you one?"

Amy produced a tiny comb from her rhinestone purse. "Don't forget to bring it when you come," she said, and stood up. "I'm going on out; I want to tell Tom something." She went.

The red-headed young woman and the tall black-chiffon one were alone, except for Mrs. Brady. The red-headed one beaded her incredible lashes. The tall one, the one called Claire, sat watching her. Presently she said, "Sylvia, look here." And Sylvia looked. Anybody, addressed in that tone, would have.

"There is one thing," Claire went on quietly, holding the other's eyes, "that I want understood. And that is, *'Hands off!'* Do you hear me?"

"I don't know what you mean."

"You do know what I mean!"

The red-headed girl shrugged her shoulders. "Amy told you she saw us, I suppose."

"Precisely. And," went on Claire, gathering up her possessions and rising, "as I said before, you're to keep away." Her eyes blazed sudden white-hot rage. "Because, as you very well know, he belongs to *me,*" she said, and departed, slamming the door.

BETWEEN ELEVEN O'CLOCK and one Mrs. Brady was very busy indeed. Never for more than a moment during those two hours was the dressing room empty. Often it was jammed, full to overflowing with curled cropped heads, with ivory arms and shoulders, with silk and lace and chiffon, with legs. The door flapped in and back, in and back. The mirrors caught and held—and lost—a hundred different faces. Powder veiled the dressing table with a thin white dust; cigarette stubs, scarlet at the tips, choked the ash-receiver. Dimes and quarters clattered into Mrs. Brady's saucer—and were transferred to Mrs. Brady's purse. The original seventy cents remained. That much, and no more, would Mrs. Brady gamble on the integrity of womankind.

She earned her money. She threaded needles and took stitches. She powdered the backs of necks. She supplied towels for soapy, dripping hands. She removed a speck from a teary blue eye and pounded the heel on a slipper. She curled the straggling ends of a black bob, and a gray bob, pinned a velvet flower on a lithe round waist, mixed three doses of bicarbonate of soda, took charge of a shed pink-satin girdle, collected, on hands and knees, several dozen fake pearls that had wept from a broken string.

She served chorus girls and schoolgirls, gay young matrons and gayer young mistresses, a lady who had divorced four husbands, and a lady who had poisoned one, the secret (more or less) sweetheart of a Most Distinguished Name, and the Brains of a bootleg gang. . . . She saw things. She saw a yellow check, with the ink hardly dry. She saw four tiny bruises, such as fingers might make, on an arm. She saw a girl strike another girl, not playfully. She saw a bundle of letters some man wished he had not written, safe and deep in a brocaded handbag.

About midnight the door flew open and at once was pushed shut, and a gray-eyed, lovely child stood backed against it, her palms flattened on the panels at her sides, the draperies of her white chiffon gown settling lightly to rest around her.

There were already five damsels of varying ages in the dressing room. The latest arrival marked their presence with a flick of her eyes and, standing just where she was, she called peremptorily, "Maid!"

Mrs. Brady, standing just where *she* was, said, "Yes, miss?"

"Please come here," said the girl.

Mrs. Brady, as slowly as she dared, did so.

The girl lowered her voice to a tense half-whisper. "Listen! Is there any way I can get out of here except through this door I came in?"

Mrs. Brady stared at her stupidly.

"Any window?" persisted the girl. "Or anything?"

Here they were interrupted by the exodus of two of the damsels-of-varying-ages. Mrs. Brady opened the door for them—and in so doing caught a glimpse of a man who waited in the hall outside, a debonair, old-young man with a girl's furry wrap hung over his arm, and his hat in his hand.

The door clicked. The gray-eyed girl moved out from the wall, against which she had flattened herself—for all the world like one eluding pursuit in a cinema.

"What about that window?" she asked, pointing.

"That's all the farther it opens," said Mrs. Brady.

"Oh! And it's the only one—isn't it?"

"It is."

"Damn," said the girl. "Then there's *no* way out?"

"No way but the door," said Mrs. Brady testily.

The girl looked at the door. She seemed to look *through* the door, and to despise and to fear what she saw. Then she looked at Mrs. Brady. "Well," she said, "then the only thing to do is to stay in here."

She stayed. Minutes ticked by. Jazz crooned distantly, stopped, struck up again. Other girls came and went. Still the gray-eyed girl sat on the couch, with her back to the wall and her shapely legs crossed, smoking cigarettes, one from the stub of another.

After a long while she said, "Maid!"

"Yes, miss?"

"Peek out that door, will you, and see if there's anyone standing there."

Mrs. Brady peeked, and reported that there was. There was a gentleman with a little bit of a black mustache standing there. The same gentleman, in fact, who was standing there "just after you come in."

"Oh, Lord," sighed the gray-eyed girl. "Well . . . I can't stay here all *night,* that's one sure thing."

She slid off the couch, and went listlessly to the

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dressing table. There she occupied herself for a minute or two. Suddenly, without a word, she darted out.

Thirty seconds later Mrs. Brady was elated to find two crumpled one-dollar bills lying in her saucer. Her joy, however, died a premature death. For she made an almost simultaneous second discovery. A saddening one. Above all, a puzzling one.

"Now what for," marveled Mrs. Brady, "did she want to walk off with them *scissors?*"

This at twelve-twenty-five.

At twelve-thirty a quartette of excited young things burst in, babbling madly. All of them had their evening wraps with them; all talked at once. One of them, a Dresden china girl with a heart-shaped face, was the centre of attention. Around her the rest fluttered like monstrous buterflies; to her they addressed their shrill exclamatory cries. "Babe," they called her.

Mrs. Brady heard snatches: "Not in this state, unless. . . ." "Well, you can in Maryland, Jimmy says." "Oh, there must be some place nearer than . . ." "Isn't this *marvelous?*" "When did it happen, Babe? When did you decide?"

"Just now," the girl with the heart-shaped face sang softly, "when we were dancing."

The babble resumed, "But listen, Babe, what'll your mother and father . . . ?" "Oh, never mind, let's hurry." "Shall we be warm enough with just these thin wraps, do you think? Babe, will you be warm enough? Sure?"

Powder flew and little pocket combs marched through bright marcels. Flushed cheeks were painted pinker still.

"My pearls," said Babe, "are *old.* And my dress and my slippers are *new.* Now, let's see—what can I *borrow?*"

A lace handkerchief, a diamond bar pin, a pair of earrings were proffered. She chose the bar pin, and its owner unpinned it proudly, gladly.

"I've got blue garters!" exclaimed another girl.

"Give me one, then," directed Babe. "I'll trade with you. . . . There! That fixes that."

More babbling, "Hurry! Hurry up!" . . . "Listen, are you *sure* we'll be warm enough? Because we can stop at my house; there's nobody home." "Give me that puff, Babe, I'll powder your back." "And just to think, a week ago you'd never even met each other!" "Oh, hurry *up,* let's get *started!*" "I'm ready." "So'm I." "Ready, Babe? You look adorable." "Come on, everybody."

They were gone again, and the dressing room seemed twice as still and vacant as before.

A minute of grace, during which Mrs. Brady wiped the spilled powder away with a damp gray rag. Then the door jumped open again. Two evening gowns appeared and made for the dressing table in a bee line. Slim tubular gowns they were, one silver, one palest yellow. Yellow hair went with the silver gown, brown hair with the yellow. The silver-gowned, yellow-haired girl wore orchids on her shoulder, three of them, and a flashing bracelet on each fragile wrist. The other girl looked less prosperous; still, you would rather have looked at her.

Both ignored Mrs. Brady's cosmetic display as utterly as they ignored Mrs. Brady, producing full silver-and-enamel field equipment of their own.

"Well," said the girl with the orchids, rouging energetically, "how do you like him?"

"Oh-h—all right."

"Meaning. 'Not any,' hmm? I suspected as much!" The girl with the orchids turned in her chair and scanned her companion's profile with disapproval. "See here, Marilee," she drawled, "are you going to be a damn fool *all* your life?"

"He's fat," said Marilee dreamily. "Fat, and—greasy, sort of. I mean, greasy in his mind. Don't you know what I mean?"

"I know *one* thing," declared the girl with orchids. "I know Who He Is! And if I were you, that's all I'd need to know. *Under the circumstances.*"

The last three words, stressed meaningly, affected the girl called Marilee curiously. She grew grave. Her lips and lashes drooped. For some seconds she sat frowning a little, breaking a black-sheathed lipstick in two and fitting it together again.

"She's worse," she said finally, low.

"Worse?"

Marilee nodded.

"Well," said the girl with orchids, "there you are. It's the climate. She'll never be anything *but* worse, if she doesn't get away. Out West, or somewhere."

"I know," murmured Marilee.

The other girl opened a tin of eye shadow. "Of course," she said drily, "suit yourself. She's not *my* sister."

Marilee said nothing. Quiet she sat, breaking the lipstick, mending it, breaking it.

"Oh, well," she breathed finally, wearily, and straightened up. She propped her elbows on the plate-glass dressing-table top and leaned toward the mirror, and with the lipstick she began to make her coral-pink mouth very red and gay and reckless and alluring.

NIGHTLY AT ONE O'CLOCK Vane and Moreno dance for the Club Français. They dance a tango, they dance a waltz; then, by way of encore, they do a Black Bottom, and a trick of their own called the Wheel. They dance for twenty, thirty minutes. And while they dance you do not leave your table—for this is what you came to see. Vane and Moreno. The New York thrill. The sole justification for the five-dollar *couvert* extorted by Billy Costello.

From one until half-past, then, was Mrs. Brady's recess. She had been looking forward to it all the evening long. When it began—when the opening chords of the tango music sounded stirringly from the room outside—Mrs. Brady brightened. With a right good will she sped the parting guests.

Alone, she unlocked her cupboard and took out her magazine—the magazine she had bought three hours before. Heaving a great breath of relief and satisfaction, she plumped herself on the couch and fingered the pages. Immediately she was absorbed, her eyes drinking up printed lines, her lips moving soundlessly.

The magazine was Mrs. Brady's favourite. Its stories were true stories, taken from life (so the editor said); and to Mrs. Brady they were live, vivid threads in the dull, drab pattern of her night.

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The Executioner.

The Red Mark

By JOHN RUSSELL

John Russell

EVEN NOW nobody can tell his name, though doubtless it was a grand and a proud one. Perhaps you could find it in the files of the Bordeaux press twenty years ago, when they sentenced him to transportation for life for five proved murders. Since then it has been officially forgotten. But the man himself has lived on. He lives and he continues to develop his capabilities—as we are all expected to do here in New Caledonia.

M. de Nou, we call him. He is our only convict official. Ordinarily, you comprehend, our jailers do not admit convicts to the administration. We are citizens, if you like, in this criminal commonwealth. We are the populace of this outlaw colony at the far navel of the earth. We are artisans, workmen, domestics: we are masons, cooks, farmers: we are even landholders and concessionaires—enjoying the high privilege of forced labour, the lofty civic title of cattle in a bull-pen. It is all very philanthropic: but we have not yet risen to fill posts under the government. Except one of us. He has been raised because they could find no other, convict or free, to perform the peculiar duties of the position. That is M. de Nou. We hate him. There is not a creature of us from Balade to Nouméa, from the nickel mines of Thio to the forests of Baie du Sud, that does not hate and fear him as some other people hate and fear sin. The very Canaques flee at the whisper of his coming, and invoke their own dark gods against this white demon in the flesh. Eight thousand felons bear the thought of him in daily bitterness. We have been thieves, assassins, poisoners; we have been set aside in a sort of infected rubbish-box, the sweepings of the prisons: but the last of us, perishing from thirst, would turn back a cup that had been polluted by the touch of M. de Nou. When M. de Nou comes to die the devil will have to dig a deeper pit. Hell is too good for M. de Nou.

He is the executioner. He operates the guillotine. Not for any pay or profit nor for the rank it gives him: but from choice. It is his capability! It is the thing he likes to do.

Me, I am even with him. I am even with him against all time. Should it be my fate to pass through his hands some day, should he stand to perform his last dreadful offices for me, still am I even with him. I would grin from under the slide itself and I would say to him—"M. de Nou, I am even with you!" But I would not tell him how. I would turn silent from those haunted yellow eyes, half-understanding and ravening at me, and I would die content to leave him to his damnation. No, I would not tell! . . . Only I am telling you, truly, so that perhaps this tale may reach some of our friends who have escaped from New Caledonia into the world again. They will remember, and they will rejoice to hear how I evened the score of M. de Nou. Listen:

It was soon after my release from the Collective—when I was considered to be properly chastened by residence in the cells—that I had the ill-luck to meet this individual.

You can see for yourself I was never built for rude labour. But I have a certain deftness of my fingers and perhaps also—well, a certain polish—what? . . . Monsieur agrees? Too kind! Your servant, Monsieur. . . . Anyway, it was quite natural I should find employment with Maître Sergeo, he who keeps the barber shop in the Rue des Fleurs.

Maître Sergeo is a worthy man, a *libéré*, which means he was formerly a life convict himself, you understand, though since restored to certain rights within the colony limits. Requiring an assistant at his lathery trade he applied to the penitentiary on Île de Nou.

"Here is a brisk fellow," said the sub-commandant, leading me out like a horse at a fair. "Number 7897. Docile and clever. Condemned for eight years. Having served his Collective with a clear record. If you are ever dull about your place he will sing you the latest operas. He has all the polite accomplishments."

"A duke in trouble," suggested Maître Sergeo, regarding me with his sober twinkle. "What romance! . . . Perhaps he is the Red Mark himself!"

Strange he should have said that. Strange, too, that I should have heard the term then and there for

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the first time in my life. Afterwards I found it common enough, a kind of by-word among people who affect to share the inner mysteries of police and crime. And later still I had good reason to remember it.

Meanwhile the sub-commandant was encouraging no unofficial illusions on my account.

"I said nothing about a duke," he returned. "But this is a superior type. He has been a student in his day, and even has taken prizes."

"I hope he has not the habit of taking them from the till," said Maître Sergeo, like a prudent patron. "What was his little affair?"

The sub-commandant consulted my ticket.

"An argument with a knife, it appears. A favourable case. Only his enemy was so ill-conditioned as to die."

"I shall employ him," decided Maître Sergeo. "A man who is handy with a knife should also qualify with a razor."

That is how I came, as Bibi-Ri always said, to be scraping throats instead of cutting them. Myself, I considered the jest rather poor taste and Bibi-Ri a good deal of a chattering monkey. But what would you? Nobody could be angry with that mad fellow. He was privileged.

Also, as it happened, Bibi-Ri himself was my single client on this particular afternoon of which I speak. I recall it with an authentic clearness: one of those days made in paradise for a reproach upon us poor wretches in purgatory: the air sweet and mellow, spiced with tropic blossoms: the sky a blue ravishment: the sunlight tawny in the street outside as if seen through a glass of rich wine.

It was very quiet and peaceful. From the Place des Cocotiers not far away one heard the band discoursing. Those convict musicians were playing "Perle d'Italie," as I bring to mind: a faded but graceful melody. One could be almost happy at moments like this, forgetting the shameful canvas uniform and the mockery of one's freedom on a leash. I even hummed the tune as I listened, and kept the measure with stropping my blade.

I waited for Bibi-Ri. By an amiable conceit he never failed each day to get his chin new razored—though in truth it resembled nothing so much as a small onion: as I often told him.

"That is no reason why you should peel it, sacred farceur!" he would sputter. "Please to notice I have only the one skin to my face!"

But this day he was late. I missed the merry rascal. His hour went by and still he did not come. And then, of a sudden, I spied him.

He was passing among the market stalls on the opposite pave: unmistakable, his quick, spare figure in the jacket tight-buttoned to the chin as he always wore it and the convict's straw hat pulled low on his brow. Bibi-Ri in fact. But he never even glanced to my side. At the pace of a rent collector he hurried by and disappeared. . . . This is singular, I thought. What game has he started now?

Presently he came hurrying back again, and this trip I discovered he was following a girl. But yes! A market girl. Only a slip of a thing—I could not see her well—a dainty piece she seemed, supple as a kitten, who threaded her way with a basket on her arm. I caught a flash of bare ankle white as milk, the sheen of her hair, smooth like a raven's wing: and she was gone, with Bibi-Ri at her skirts.

Three times I saw them so, through the drifting, chaffering throng.

"The rogue!" I murmured. "He has found a better amusement than getting himself flayed by me. Evidently!"

At the very word came a swift clatter of sandals, and who should burst into the shop upon me but that same Bibi-Ri. I had a finger lifted to accuse him, but I stopped at sight of his face.

"Dumail!" he cried. "Hide me!"

My faith, he took one's breath away.

"Hide me and say nothing!" he implored.

Well, then I thought he was simply up to some of his jokes again. You understand, there is no actual hiding in a penal settlement, where we all live in the eye of the police. Nevertheless I obeyed, planted him in my chair, flung a cloth about his neck, and slapped on a great mask of lather.

Woodcuts by M. J. Gallegher

"In the name of God, what's that?"

I had him well settled under the razor when a shadow edged across the doorway. Glancing over his shoulder, Bibi-Ri made a jump to rise.

"Animal!" I protested. "Will you take care!"

But I saw him staring with a strange fear.

Just outside by the threshold stood a man, an amazingly tall man, looking in at us. The sunlight descended on him like the flood of a proscenium, and he himself might have seemed a player in some stage burlesque. Yes, one might have smiled at first glimpse of him: a travesty of fashion in his long black redingote and varnished high hat of ancient form which added the touch of caricature to his height. One might have smiled, I say . . . but the smile would have frozen next instant as a ripple freezes on a street puddle.

His face was a moist and shining white, the white of a corpse under the icy spray of the Morgue. He

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was old, of reverend years, though still straight and strong as a poplar. And with that mouth of painted passion and a great nose curved like a saber and the glittering tiger eyes in the skull of him—I leave you to imagine anyone more appalling.

Close behind him came another: a bandy-legged, squat fellow like a little black spider, in attendance.

Even then, before knowing, I shrank from them both. They resembled the bizarre and evil figures of the Guignol that used to haunt my dreams in childhood. Truly. And the tall one was Polichinelle, the image of a gratuitous and uncomprehended wickedness.

"Well done, hireling," he observed, in the voice of a crow. "Well done, indeed! You are something of a craftsman too. A good beginning. And a good subject, who is ripe to have the head shaved from his shoulders, I should think. . . . Pray continue," he said. "Cut again and cut deeper!"

THEREUPON I became aware he was addressing me, and with the most pointed, the most sinister interest: and next I found myself still holding the razor over Bibi-Ri's cheek where he had taken an ugly gash. That big devil smiled and chuckled in intimate fashion at my red blade. His eyes shone like topaz. Stupidly I followed their gaze. When I looked up again . . . the two outside were gone.

"Name of God!" I cried. "Who are those?"

Bibi-Ri had fallen back in his chair.

"The vultures!"

Well, I understood fast enough that I had made acquaintance of the terrible M. de Nou. The other would be his aide and familiar, a former Polish anarchist—I had heard—whom even the society of convicts rejected and who bore the fit name: Bombiste. These were the dreaded servants of the guillotine. But now they had passed I was bold as the best: I could mock myself.

"Imbeciles!" I laughed. "To be scared by an old bogey like that! The executioner? So be it. We can curse him and let him go. . . . Though in truth he has a sickly notion of an afternoon call, the lascar! . . . Sit still while I plaster that sliced onion of yours."

But something had come upon Bibi-Ri. For once he gave me back no jest.

"The monster has marked me down! You heard him? It is a warning!" At that he started up, all streaky with soap and blood as he was, and must rush away on some errand. And then remembering it would be impossible to run the police limits of Nouméa before dark, collapsed again. "I am lost!"

Figure my amazement.

"But how?" I demanded. "Does your blessed executioner have power to pick his own victims? . . . Does he go about cropping heads, for example, like a man in a flower garden? What can he make to you? . . . Unless perhaps he has come between you and that fair fortune I saw you pursuing so ardently a moment ago."

The way his jaw dropped! As if I had touched the very spring of his destiny.

Now you can guess that I knew perhaps a little—no matter how little—of lawlessness and violence and secret intrigue persisting within this model criminal laboratory of ours. Do you change vice to virtue by transporting it half a world away and bottling it up? A disturbing question. At least if you expect your convicts to work, to aspire, even to marry and to multiply like free men, you must expect them also to covet, to scheme, to quarrel and to sin—again like free men. These facts I had noted without exploring too deeply, you comprehend. But Bibi-Ri was the last I should have credited with a share in their darker meaning.

Only picture this client as I had found him. A nimble rogue: a kind of licensed pest, with a droll face resembling those rubber toys that wink and grimace between your fingers. True, he had been shipped with the worst of us. But what of that? One knows these gentlemen the Parisian police: how they cry a wolf and then go out and nab some stray puppy in the street. Bibi-Ri! One wondered how he had ever earned his sentence.

And yet—and yet there was certainly something about the fellow. In his eyes were depths. Something fateful and despairing. Something, in view of his accustomed mad humour, to make me pitiful and uneasy.

"Look here, my zig," I said. "I have seen too much and not enough. What have you done? I spy a gay mystery that makes a comedian like you play such a part."

"Perhaps it is the other part I have to play," he returned, with a gleam of his proper spirit. "Perhaps I am playing it at the last gasp of fright—my poor knees clapping like castanets. . . .

"Dumail," he said, "put it this way: Suppose you were within three counted weeks of your final release from this hell of an island. Your little red ticket in hand and the actual ship in harbour that presently should bear you home. Within sight of heaven—you understand. Able to taste it. Able to count the days still left you like so many bars on a red-hot gridiron still to be crossed. Three little weeks, Dumail! . . . And then your sacred luck offered to trip you up and cheat you again. . . . Rigolo—what?"

"Very rigolo," I agreed, luring him. "But it seems to me you are borrowing your effects from the martyrdom of the holy St. Laurent."

"Oh, I have a stranger impersonation than that in my repertoire," he flashed. "Conceive, if you can, that I am also supposed to fill the *rôle* of a seigneur—and a very noble gentleman, too—in disguise!"

PERCHED THERE on the chair with a dirty towel about his neck, his hair in a wisp, smeared like a clown and preaching his gentility, he made a figure completely comic—should I say?—or tragic. Anyway I gave a gesture of derision that stung him past endurance.

"Dumail—" he broke out. "You laugh? Dumail, will you believe this? There is awaiting me back home at the present moment a heritage of millions. Of millions, I swear to you! Not the treasure of an opium dream, Dumail, but a place ready established among the great and the fortunate. For me: Number Matricule 2232! Life in a gondola, do you see? Rank,

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luxury, leisure. Beauty. Women. Happiness! Everything a poor lost devil could crave!"

Well, you know, it was a bit too much for me.

"Comedian!" I applauded. "Ah-ah—comedian!"

A sort of fury took him. All else forgotten, he jerked loose the collar of his jacket: made to spread it wide—checked himself and instead drew out from his breast an object for my inspection.

I had view of a miniature: one of those cherubic heads on ivory that relate to the model, perhaps, as a promise relates to a fact in this naughty world. Nevertheless I could trace a sort of semblance to that roguish front as it might have seemed in childhood—all ringlets and innocence, cerulean eye and carmine cheek—the whole encircled by a double row of pearls; Bibi-Ri himself.

"My title deed."

I was impressed. Impossible to deny a richness in this miniature. And while the likeness was thin the pearls were indubitable. Still—

"*Blagueur!*" I murmured. "Where did you snaffle it?"

Gloomily he regarded me. "You are like the others. Always while I was kicking about the gutters or the jail it was that way. No one would listen. Another of Bibi-Ri's jokes! And I lacked any clue to this trinket: my single poor inheritance. . . . But now—look! These queer signs on the reverse. They have been deciphered. Oh, an unbelievable stroke of chance! Of course, I have much to learn. The name of the family. My own true name itself. But at least I am in the way of proof, and this time I was going to win! . . . A famished man—a man famished since his birth, Dumail—is set before a boundless feast. Does he joke about that?"

"Perhaps not," I admitted. "Go on."

"But I am showing you what Life means to me!"

"And M. de Nou—?" I reminded him.

He shuddered: his head dropped upon his breast.

"M. de Nou—is Death!"

Well, you know, this was all very thrilling for emotion, but as a statement it left something to be desired.

"Answer me," I commanded. "Have you killed anyone?"

"No!"

"Is there another sentence hanging over you? Have you some stain on your prison record?"

"None."

"Whom have you wronged?"

"Nobody."

"Then sacred pig! It is only a folly of nerves after all! Just because you expect to cash your millions and swim in champagne at last? . . . Bear up under it, my boy. Stiffen your lip! Faith, you might be a missing dauphin or even the Red Mark himself—as people say—and still you could meet your luck with a little courage!"

Like a jack on wires Bibi-Ri sprang to his feet.

"True!" he laughed, shrill. "You are right, Dumail. You are the friend in need! . . . Where is that blessed mop, to dry my face at least. So! I'm off! . . . But tonight—what? I owe you something, Dumail: you and your curiosity! Tonight you shall come behind the scenes. If you dare. Understood?" He wheeled at the step: his eyes held their old twinkling deviltry. "I was a thief before I was ever a gentleman," he said, with his wry grin, "and I can still play that farce to its end—get through and done with it and pull out once for all! . . . You shall see for yourself!"

Thereupon he left me to the haze of bewilderment in which I lived for the rest of the day.

Now you can imagine without much telling that we have ways—we convicts assigned here and there on service—to conduct our own underground affairs in despite authority. Unnecessary to explain these little evasions. Enough to say my client was as good as his word that evening. Enough to say that under misty stars, while the military of the watch were safely watching, Bibi-Ri crept out of town by forbidden paths: and that I crept along with him.

INLAND FROM NOUMÉA for a wide district is all one checkerboard of gardens and small estates where *libérés* and convict proprietors—the aristocrats of our settlement—enjoy their snug retreat. Not being a reformed bandit myself, skilled in agriculture and piety, I was strange to this countryside. But Bibi-Ri had the key. I could only tag at his heels through blind plantations and admire his silence and his speed. Truly, as he said, he was taking me behind the scenes: until at last, in a grove of flamboyants that wrapped the night with darker webbing, he set hand to a door.

For all I knew it could have opened on the Pit itself: but a shaft of light guided me stumbling into a stone-flagged kitchen, low and dim and smoky in fact as some lesser inferno.

By the hearth a woman turned from tending the kettle to overlook us steadily. She was alone, but my faith! she had no need to fear. Figure to yourself this massive sibyl with a face planned on a mason's square, deep-chisled and brooding in a flush of firelight. She was like that. Yes, a sibyl in her cave, to whom Bibi-Ri entered gingerly as a cat.

"I am here, Mother Carron," he said.

Then for sure and for the first time I saw where we stood. Mother Carron! In Nouméa—through all the obscure complex of convict life—no name bore more significance: or less, in the official sense. For she had no number. Consider what that means to a community of jailbirds. The finger of the law had never touched her. Consider how singular in a country of keepers and felons!

She was a free colonist. Her husband, a distinguished housebreaker, had been transported some years before. Whereupon she had had the hardihood—sufficient if you like!—to immigrate, to claim a concession and to have that same husband assigned her as a convict labourer.

Since then she had wielded a curious power. Her size, her tongue, her knowledge of crime and criminals and her contempt of them all—these made her formidable. But also it was whispered that queer things went on at her plantation under the flamboyant trees: a famous rendezvous where no prying agent ever found a shred of evidence—against her or anyone else. Successful escapes had been decided there, they said.

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And disputes of convict factions that troubled no other court, and even politics of the underworld at home, referred to certain great ones among us. Our inner conclave of *transportés*—so dread and secret that to be identified a member brings solitary confinement in the black cells—had assembled there to seek her counsel. Had demurred to it and been routed with her broom whisking about their ears, if rumour spoke true. For she was a lady of weighty ways.

Me, I was glad to slip aside unchallenged. I had no desire to linger between that dame and the purpose, whatever it might be, that dwelt in the fixity of her frown. As a spectator I blotted myself in the shadows, to attend the next act of this hidden and sombre drama.

"Monsieur," she began, with an affectation wholly foreign to her rough voice, "I have the felicity to inform you that our beloved Zelie is home from Fonwhary again."

"I knew it," murmured Bibi-Ri.

"She resides at present under this poor roof."

He cast a nervous glance toward the stairway. "I knew that," he said.

"Ah? You know so much? After staying away so long? . . . We began to doubt it."

She came to plant herself before him, and the effect of her politeness was like a bludgeon.

"In that case be kind enough to sit, Monsieur Bibi-Ri. Dear little Monsieur Bibi-Ri: we have missed you! Be seated. You bring your pockets full of news, it seems."

But it seemed, on the other hand, not so. I saw my companion brace himself. Evidently this was his stage-play: the ordeal he had now to meet.

"You must excuse me, Madame. I cannot remain, and I have no news. . . . Except that I drop this business on the spot. Like a live coal, Madame!"

His whimsy might have disarmed any other.

"I have done my best with Zelie. Sad! Somehow she fails to perceive any longer my true charm. . . . You had sent me mysterious word, Madame, of some danger to which you said she was drifting. Well—seeing her in the public market today I sought to question her: at the least to give her brotherly advice. Madame—she repulsed me. Like that! Would neither talk nor listen. Said we were watched. Said it was not safe.

"Sapristi! . . . You can believe I was ready to quit then and there! But presently I found a better reason—if I needed one, Madame. For casting about, perplexed as I was, of a sudden I recognized—can you guess? Why, the man! The individual you expected to send me against, I imagine. From whom I am supposed to guard her, perhaps! I saw him.

"After that: enough and many thanks!" he laughed, with a catch in his throat. "No place for Bibi! Finished. *Rien ne va plus!* . . . For who am I to chase any maid so unwilling? And at the same time who am I and what should I be doing—in my present station, Madame—to cross the little harmless fancies of such a personage? . . . It was M. de Nou!" he cried.

Still she made no move.

"And so—Bibi-Ri retires," he concluded, unsteadily, edging for his exit. "I withdraw! You can find some one better fitted. My time is up. My ship sails soon. I will not need to come again, I think. In parting—"

"What!" It was like the break of a banking storm. "What did you sing me there? 'Not come again'? Forty devils! Do you know if you hadn't come tonight in answer to my message I would have had you haled by the leg? . . . Why, you two sous' worth! You think to employ your sneaking pickpocket tricks on me? To decamp with the prize I taught you to use: and pay nothing for it?"

There was incredulity in her wrath: the measure of her rude mastery.

"Before God! Where did you get the courage to try that?" she marveled. "As if I had not trouble enough already with the other stubborn brat herself. And now you! . . . Have you altogether forgotten that I betrothed you myself to my niece—my own dead sister's child—when she came visiting from the church school at Fonwhary some weeks ago?"

"You said it was so," admitted Bibi-Ri, squirming.

"Good! Then you can wager it was so, my boy. . . . And at that time did you or did you not strike a solemn bargain with me?"

He made no denial.

"You wept—sacred pipe! You called every saint to witness your gratitude. Anything I wanted! Zelie? Of course. You would always be the defense of that precious infant against the taint and the curse of Nouméa!"

He shrugged.

"You swore by your own hope of salvation to save her—to pluck this pure flower from the dung-hill and marry her the very hour of your release. Your bridal trip should carry her away to France. . . . Are these your words?"

"I offered to," he retorted. "But Zelie refused even then—you know she did! And so she has since."

"Fichtre! You and your offers! Tell me—from the day you discovered your heritage have you ever been back to persuade her?"

He avoided that stern eye.

"There it is, you see!" She gave an eloquent gesture. "As for her—leave her to me. She is only a stiff-necked little idiot who knows nothing. You should have made up her mind for her. You! I picked you for that: and you were willing enough before. But straightway: instead: what did you do? . . . Why, you began to swell up over notions of your coming greatness! That is what happened to you. Shrimp! Can't I read your soul?

"Suddenly you found yourself to be a somebody! Ambition grew in you like a mushroom. Not good enough—Zelie, of New Caledonia! She might handicap you in your fine career. You beheld a glorious future that had no place for her. But who opened that prospect? *Cré tonnerre!* Who sold it you? Who deciphered the miniature? Who but I?

"And now at last, when the girl falls in deadly peril—as much through pique as through mere blindness, be sure of it!—when I call you to redeem your pledge and protect her: you quit! You 'withdraw'! You decide to use your new airs and graces and pull your

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feet out of the wet! Because you prefer the excuse of a coward to that of a traitor—Monsieur—is that it?"

Her fist hit the table like a sledge.

"*Fainéant!* . . . Unless you brand yourself as shamefully as any Red Mark that ever lived. . . . Sit down!"

He had been sidling, bit by bit: he had taken himself almost to the door-sill: but under that tone of thunder—under that sudden amazing and cryptic jibe—he started, he faltered, he obeyed. She bulked above him, and it was about this time I began truly to be sorry for my harlequin friend.

It was plain enough by this time, you understand, that I was witnessing one of those obscure human tangles which ravel themselves in the depths of a penal society. Possible nowhere else, I suppose. Yet its threads were the passions, and its centre was the heart: and poor Bibi-Ri no poorer hero than you or I or any of us might prove. At this point he had fallen back to his defense: sullen, awed, but also intently curious of her. How she expected to force him to her design I could not guess. But breathlessly I watched while she wove about him and about.

Back by the hearth she stood meditative for a space in silence: a dim presence in that room where the kettle hissed and gave off its vapours—of brewing fates, perhaps.

"Give me a man if he be a bad one. A man who can stand to his game two days on end—how do they put it: those savants?—'developing his capabilities.' Ah! Not like these others. Waffles! Half-baked. Mixed with small impulses good and evil. Let him be saint or devil, so he develop that capability. Let me see him stand to it! . . . As I have seen a few:

"I REMEMBER many years ago, at the prison of Mazas," she went on, as if in casual retrospect, "they kept a certain famous captive. Myself, I was never a resident there—no thanks!—I prefer the comforts of honesty. But my one sister, now dead, she was beginning her own silly career about then. She lacked the brains to steer it safe. So for a time she inhabited that same institution. And one day as we went by the visitors' room she pinched my arm to look.

"'There goes the wickedest man in France,' she said.

"Down the courtyard came a dozen of gendarmes parading a prisoner. That was a devil—if you like! That was a type—for example. Tall and fierce and unbeaten, with the eyes of a tiger. Once to see him was never to forget him again. . . . While he was still newly caught they had always to guard him that way lest he slay some one with his manacled fists.

"He belonged to the very oldest stock of the South, it appeared: the old high noblesse. And was he rich? And proud? You can believe it. But also he was a great criminal such as walks the earth every while or so to remind us after all how short a journey it is to hell. A true devil. My sister knew him. She had been a servant in the household. She knew his whole story—which soon was hushed, I can tell you: a scandal too black to publish."

Her voice rose a rumbling note under the vault.

"Messieurs, never mind the rest of the tale at present. But inquire only this: Did they slay him? Did they give him his deserts? . . . Oh, naturally not—else, where is the use of Nouméa! We must suppose those savants were glad of the specimen. 'The wickedest man'—do you see? And as for him: he was strong. And cunning to seize his opportunities. And above all, true to his own devilment. So he won reprieve, Messieurs. They preserved him. They shipped him out to this tropic forcing house of ours—to let him keep on developing! . . . And he has. He does. My faith! With the approval of the Administration. With all kinds of special privileges and gratifications!"

She moved from the shadow again.

"Why do you tell me this?" demanded Bibi-Ri, hoarsely.

"For your instruction, Bibi-Ri," she returned, with her tone of intolerable significance. "To show you how one man stood to it. Admirable—eh? . . . A moment ago you spoke of his 'harmless fancies.' Well: he gluts them. He gets what he wants. A fancy of pride? Behold him in his black coat and his lofty office! A fancy for blood? From time to time he stands to spill it publicly on the scaffold! A fancy for young and innocent flesh—a solace to his old age? . . . Do you imagine he would be balked of that? Or rather are you prepared to hear how—with official permission and even the clerical benediction—how he manages to bedevil and to win the particular young girl of his choice?"

In hammer blows she planted each phrase.

"How this same man has let no grass grow under his feet in his little rivalry with yourself, Bibi-Ri!

She spared him nothing.

"How, having desired your Zelie without 'ifs' or 'buts,' he found means to make his purpose good, Bibi-Ri!"

He could only gape at her.

"How he followed her to Fonwhary: how he followed her back: how he missed no trick of persuading and persisting: how he finally forced her consent like any true lover in this very house this morning!"

"It is not possible!" gasped Bibi-Ri.

"Eh? It is true of true!" she trumpeted. "Name of God—where do you think you are? This is Nouméa! . . . Let her pass for a fool—half-mad with bitterness and chagrin though she be—and still you must admit it is not every poor orphan who gets such a chance hereabouts. What? To occupy a little manor outside the prison ground. To enjoy the little benefits of official standing. To wear the pretty trifles of jewelry, the rings and keepsakes and lockets, that fall to the master's share every time he strikes off a lucky head! . . . *Dieu!* . . . Can you picture to yourself the home-coming at that *ménage* after a day's honest labour? To be sure, she might require him first to wash his hands for fear of spoiling her new gown! But these stains of the trade—what do they matter? And so your Zelie, your sweet pigeon, your simple Caledonienne who was all too simple for you—whom you cast aside with 'brotherly advice'—she chooses to embrace that ghoul, that hell-hound, that

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With an inhuman scream, the Pole jumped for his throat.

old satyr of all the infamies. . . . Tomorrow she weds with M. de Nou!"

In blind distress he stumbled to his feet and shied from her with hands outspread to fend away the monstrous thing. But skilfully she headed him around to the foot of the stairs and brought him face to face with the actual vision descending there.

"Ask her yourself!" . . .

You have seen those figures in a window of old stained glass which leap from the haze of colour as if illumined of themselves. The girl who waited just above us on the step bore that same transparent loveliness, with all the fleshly promise of my glimpse of her in the market. She wore a single belted garment of some white peasant's stuff, but nothing could have suited better in the sombre light of that place, smoke-blued against smoky walls. In truth it might have seemed the subtlest coquetry to clothe such beauty in the coarsest garb. For she herself was delicate as a bud. Vital and lithe: with a close-set casque of jet hair, mouth like a crushed mulberry against satin, mutinous eyes and chin: the wild, slight, heavy-scented flower of these climes.

There she stood quite coolly: even languidly.

"Visitors?" she inquired, aware of us with impersonal gaze. "I wondered if any would stop tonight. It would be kind of them to come and wish me happiness."

Except that she spoke unsmiling and ignored Bibi-Ri, except for her deathly pallor, she seemed without the least consciousness of a terrible irony. And when my poor friend made some sound in his throat her pure brow clouded a bit: she pouted.

"Have you been making yourself tiresome again with the visitors, Maman? Now, where is the good of that? I wish you would not start fretting with everybody. . . . Yes, I shall be married. Yes, I shall be married tomorrow. By special civil license, and by the priest from La Foa. There! It is all settled. . . . I hope you can find something more amusing for our guests."

Incredible to see how quiet she was, how composed, how youthfully unstrained. Only when her heavy lids swept over poor Bibi-Ri and their glances crossed could you detect like electric charges the unacknowledged tension behind.

"Oh, for amusement," chuckled Mother Carron, with a savage humour, "Bibi-Ri is amused: right enough. Sacred stove—yes! . . . Only he says the affair is impossible."

For the first time Zelie regarded him fairly.

"I see no reason why anyone should think so. Unless he forgets—as I never do any more—that I am the daughter of convicts."

Ah, there was steel in that girl! What? The way she said it! Very simply. Without rancour, you understand. Letting it bite of itself. Without a quaver from that crisis of despair in which she must have learned to say it. In a flash I knew how the gleaming, soft, full-blooded slip of a creature had stood up against this tremendous aunt of hers. And could stand. And would! . . . And Bibi-Ri: he knew too. His babbling protest died cold on his lips.

"My convict father married my convict mother in this convict country," she went on, evenly. "I was born here. I must live and die here. I could never look to marry outside—could I? . . . They would say I was tainted. . . . For the rest—well, I have only to please myself, I believe."

And Mother Carron nodded like a grim showman.

"Eh? What do you think of that? A wise infant—eh? Could anything be more just and reasonable?"

And it was so. She was right. It was perfectly just: perfectly reasonable. There you had the stark and appalling fact. For this is Nouméa—as Mother Carron reminded us in good season. This is Nouméa—the Noah's Ark toy of penology. If you expect your convicts to pair off and to breed like free folk, you must expect their children likewise to couple as they can—or will: free folks themselves. And with whom? Where do you draw the line? What kind of a social formula have you left for the second generation, reared in an out-door jail? Our wise philanthropists who devised the experiment: I wonder if they ever thought so far ahead. They should have been interested in Zelie—the perfect product.

Meanwhile there remained my companion—Bibi-Ri. Poor Bibi-Ri. . . . Whatever had passed between him and that unhappy deluded child I could not know, you comprehend—in truth I never did know. But they

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must have been very close at one time: those two: before his great ambition nipped him. He was suffering. He writhed. Nevertheless I saw it was going to make no difference with him. . . . Not now. Not this late along. I sensed his effort. I heard him draw his breath sharp like a man who plucks the barb from the wound.

"One moment, Madame!" He avoided Zelie. In abrupt and flurried speech he addressed himself to Mother Carron. "A moment, Madame—I beg. This is mere madness. And painful. And unnecessary. . . . There is still one easy way out for her, you know—for Zelie, for me, for everybody. Still a way."

She unbent to him all at once as to a prodigal son.

"*Tiens!*" she cried. "You have perceived it?"

"I have remembered. I intended not to tell you: to let it come of itself. And truly—you drove it somewhat out of mind. But now—"

"At last!"

"If we can only get Zelie to listen—"

"Ha! Just look at her there!"

"It fits the need."

"She never had but one, my boy—to hear you speak out once like this: as if you meant it."

"And besides," he stammered, "it should cancel any—any obligations you might still hold against me, myself."

"*Parbleu!* I should hope so!"

He laboured on, with a kind of desperate snuffle.

"At the end, Madame, we can always turn for aid to the Church—the patient friend of us all. . . . This afternoon—uneasy about Zelie, I confess, and thinking a decisive step would be best for everyone—this very afternoon I took myself to St. Gregory's and there I saw—"

"Bibi-Ri: in a moment I shall kiss you!"

"For God's sake let me speak, Madame! . . . I saw the Directress of the Order of St. Joseph of Cluny. She heard me readily. You know—these good nuns—how they rescue any they can of the children of Nouméa. . . . Well: I arranged it. . . . Tonight a traveling sister will visit you here. By great luck she is returning home very soon. If the dispositions are favourable she has promised to take Zelie at once, to guard her and to see her safe—passage free—to France, where refuge and the consolations of religion, Madame, await her!"

In the silence that dropped you should have seen Mother Carron.

"Refuge!" she began, empurpled. "What is the fellow talking about? Conso— . . . Look here. Do you mean a convent?"

"Of course, Madame."

"A convent! In truth? Is this all you have to offer?"

"Yes, Madame."

She flung up her arms.

"Faith of God! You dare to make me ridicule like that? Animal low of ceiling! . . . But no, I tell you, but no! It is too much. My turn now. Listen to me, both. Listen to my plan! . . . Today I also went to St. Gregory's: do you hear? I also sought the aid of the Holy Church, which never refuses in the cause of morality—Heaven be praised!—to obtain a convict marriage where it can. I also obtained help. That good Father Anselm: he also promised. He also is coming here tonight! . . . And word of honour, I hope to be turned into a pepper-mill if I don't have him marry the two of you on the spot."

One and the other, she challenged them.

"You think not; you wilful imp?" she roared. "I tell you it shall be so! . . . And you, Bibi-Ri—you grin in that sickly fashion? Wait, my gar: I'm not done with you yet! Thousand thunders!—In another minute you will be crawling at the crook of my finger. . . . Attend!"

And looming on us there, gigantic in the firelight like some ancient fury, she launched her climax.

"You recall that tale I started for your benefit? Well: there is more of it. I told you my sister knew all the story of the 'wickedest man'? Well: there was one thing she did not know and would have given much to hook up—like many another blackmailer, then and since. . . . Note! . . . From the murderous purpose with which that fiend pursued all in his power—wife, family, associates—it appears he spared a single victim. The creature, indeed, in whom he centered his whole affection—to call it so—his hateful pride, at least. A single one he set aside. But only to be the instrument of a last defiance.

"Brought to exposure, his course run out: what do you suppose he did? Why, he took measures to conceal that remaining heir of his house beyond recovery. . . . He put away that son. He lost him! Completely. In space: in the world: in the crowd and the gutter. Where none should ever find him again—as none ever did, for all the rewards and all the police.

"Such cleverness—eh? Such logic. For observe. . . . They dared pass no death sentence while there appeared any chance of extracting his secret. A vast estate was waiting on the person of that child—one of the finest fortunes in France: the heritage of a golden line. He kept it waiting. At a stroke he saved himself before the judges: he hid away the only treasure he loved: he prolonged his own evil destiny through this unknown seed of his planted somewhere in the mud!"

He broke that creature Bombiste the way he would a bread-straw.

Her regard flamed on Bibi-Ri.

"Unknown—my little dears. Unknown ever since! . . . Though it is said Heaven itself had set its seal on that race for a warning and a symbol, though the

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child himself was marked from birth: was marked about the neck—so the legend goes—with a thin red line like the print of a noose or the trace of strangling fingers!"

Bibi-Ri had propped himself by the table, one hand clutching the close collar of his jacket.

"How—how could you guess . . . !"

"Ah-ah! Now will you try to throw us over? Not so easily—eh? Now don't you think you still have need of us? Until the depositions are made, at least? . . . *Sac à papier!* The very instant you showed me that old miniature and the initial it bears—I knew you, my boy! I could have read you your whole fortune then: only I saved the best of it for a wedding present! And for sure, I never expected you to try a bolt. A droll of an idea—that! To run away from your chief witness? . . . Why, stupid one!" She broke off to drop him a little mocking curtsey. "Monsieur the Duke! . . . It was my own sister had had the honour to be Your Grace's nurse!"

He was trembling. "Tell me the name of that family!"

"But certainly, my lad. . . . After you are married!"

"Don't torture me! Tell me the name of that man!"

"But certainly, my love. . . . It is M. de Nou!"

Strange how like a sinister refrain that title—that word—ran and recurred throughout the affair. But this time it had an impact as never before. Credit me! This time it came home to Bibi-Ri: and my little joker absolutely reeled under it.

"Eh?" cried Mother Carron. "Eh? How is your sacred ambition now? Is there any manhood to you? And what are you going to do about it?"

WHAT INDEED! She had reduced him to a rag. For this she had played upon a febrile nature, you understand: had battered it, dazzled it, wrung it of emotions: confirming his wildest beliefs: destroying his dearest illusions: tossing his hopes to the stars and smirching them in the mire with the same sweep:—that he might have no other will at the end. . . . And therein appeared the triumph of her masterful certitude. For presently raising his miserable and hunted eyes he looked at her: he looked for me in the shadow: he did not look at Zelie again—but he looked toward the door. . . .

How easy it might have seemed, after all! Actually in his pocket he carried his release ticket, ready dated. His ship lay in harbour. His sentence expired some few days off. A step would take him into the night. He had simply to keep safe within police limits until the hour of sailing and march himself freely on board. And then . . . he had won! You see? By his theory the world would open before him the most radiant of welcomes. By his faith he would have his life-long arrears to collect: his gorgeous dreams to realize. One must have been a felon—one must have eaten his heart in prison cells—and even in this widest and farthest of prison cells with its wall of painted horizons none the less alien and inexorable—to feel what those dreams meant to him.

Now again, as before, he had only to get himself off-stage: he needed only the boldness to break once for all with the thief's part—as he himself had said: the selfishness to stand to his game—as Mother Carron put it!

And in truth what was hindering him? No actual compulsion: none he need fear. Only impalpable things. Shame. Uncertainty, timidity, regret. The pressures of personality. The qualms of a poor juggler with life: fearful of missing—fearful of not seizing it featly. . . . Cobwebs all!

What he would have done about it the good God can tell. I have asked myself often enough. But he hesitated a bit too long: that little fool of fortune with his face of a rubber puppet squeezed by fate. Next moment the cue had been taken from him, for across the pause ran a thin, keen whistle. Mother Carron spun around. And as if dispatched on that breath—through the keyhole, perhaps—there blew in suddenly among us from the back of the house somewhere a tiny, gray-faced, white-haired wraith of a man.

"Well—idiot? . . . What's up now?"

From her greeting, as from the blurred effacement of the apparition himself, one divined without trouble the person of that former redoubtable housebreaker: Carron. In a voice scarcely above the singing of the kettle he made his announcement.

"There are two coming by the road."

"Hey?" she bawled. "What two?"

"A priest and another."

Mother Carron smiled the only smile to pass upon her wintry front that night: she spread her hands before us.

"Enfin! What did I tell you? And in great good time, my word! . . . You hear that—you others? . . . Go and welcome Father Anselm, fool! And fetch out the wine, if you are able to stir your pins!"

The shadow sighed.

"It is not Father Anselm."

"Not Father Anselm? . . . Imbecile! Of course it is."

"It is not Father Anselm."

"Who then—*vaurien?*"

"It is the fat priest from La Foa."

Impossible to doubt his steadfast whispering.

"La Foa!" she echoed, stricken. "You say? Not truly! . . . La Foa?"

"I saw him."

"And another? What other?"

"We think he is Bombiste."

I can swear that wretched individual never in his black past had handled a bomb with half the effect his mere nickname produced among us there.

"Bombiste! The executioner's assistant? . . . From Île de Nou? . . . Here?"

"They are at the gate."

"Thunder of God! . . . And above all, at this time!" She caught his arm. "Delay that priest! Any way and anyhow: hold him! . . . Confess to him, if nothing else will do—Heaven knows you need it! . . . And let the other through at once. Be quick!"

She banished him like a puff of smoke and we waited in drawn suspense—we four—our eyes on the archway through which this visitant must now appear.

"What can he want?" demanded Mother Carron. "That blood-stained basket robber!"

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And Zelie answered her very quietly.

"I suppose he brings me my message from M. de Nou."

You will remember in all my term at Nouméa I had seen but once before this ignoble under-servant of the guillotine. I could have preferred never to see him again. He did not improve on closer view.

He was one of those creatures somehow resembling insects: like the ciliate and noxious things that run about when you lift a damp rock. You know? . . . Very black. Very hairy, with hair overlaid in fringes curiously soft and glistening. With eyes very small, round and quick as beads. In person he was misshapen: bandy-legged: but with all that a powerful ruffian, whose long, crooked arms might have ended in nippers like a scorpion's.

There you have the fellow Bombiste, who presently slid in at the doorway and stood blinking through the light.

We regarded this type: and he us. Did I tell you he called himself a Pole? I cannot say. But certainly his speech was hardly to be comprehended. He spat something that could have passed equally for a greeting or a curse. And so far he had the advantage of us: for any reply of ours would have been only the half of that.

To do her justice Mother Carron kept a bold front to him. But she was handling here a very different sort of brute—not to be reached by that singular influence she exerted on the convict community at large: himself an outcast among convicts: sharing the isolation of his detested master on Île de Nou. When she demanded to know his affair—

"Official!" he snarled back, with his slit grin.

Indeed it must have been a rare errand for him: a rare jest. He affected in his manner a gratified swagger of contempt: natural enough for a man with whom the vilest felon would never willingly speak, you understand: natural enough for one whose only dealing with his fellows was to valet their shorn bodies on the scaffold and to gather their last poor trifles of property for the executioner's wage—"robbing the basket," as we say.

"What are you after?" persisted Mother Carron.

"Not you, old woman!" he retorted. "Not any of you," he added with brutal assurance as his glance shifted past Bibi-Ri and myself. "But I come to see . . . Mam'zelle here. And Mam'zelle alone!"

Well, we had had warning, to be sure. From this welter of evil portents some actual horror was due. And my faith, he wasted little time about it! He passed us over as if we had been less than nothing. He removed his ragged straw hat to twirl on his finger. He scraped low before the calm-faced girl who still waited impassive on the stairs. And then and there he delivered himself of the message he had been taught. All at once. Even glibly. With a kind of damnable sputtering eloquence.

"Mam'zelle Zelie—at your service—I bring you this word from my master: best respects and affections. He bids me say the civil ceremony will be for tomorrow, as planned. But he mistrusts your clever aunt—who might indeed try tricks to interfere. And so . . . you see . . . tonight: straightway: will be the wedding, Mam'zelle!

"The priest is here. In me behold one happy witness! For the other—" He grinned. "Perhaps Madame Carron will do." He thrust a thumb at Bibi-Ri. "Or that young buck yonder. The master himself only delays his impatience a few moments formally to arrive when all is ready. Safely escorted, you can believe, in this place of so bad a reputation—from which, moreover, he promises to remove you at once."

To see the rascal strut, and what airs he took!

"Meantime, Mam'zelle—in attending—please will you put on your best frock and prepare yourself," he concluded. "And as your wedding gift . . . the master has pleasure to send you herewith the precious chains and jewels in this box and asks you to wear them for his sake!"

Throughout this stupefying recital none of the rest of us stirred, you will conceive. And when he had done we could still only stare. A picture, if you like! Zelie, the unfortunate child: and there, distorting himself in gallant gesture, offering tribute, that foul ambassador! The glow of fallen embers in the fire smudged him with infernal fantasy—it lent her the softest flush, making her young beauty to quicken and to kindle. As if a guilty angel should stoop from the lower step of heaven to take a bribe of hell. For she assented: make no mistake. . . . She was going to assent. He tendered her a small black box of leather: she had a hand outstretched to it—when a word dropped sheer and arresting in the silence as a pebble in a well.

It was not Mother Carron who spoke: our crafty hostess was far too burdened just then under the collapse of all her craftiness. Decidedly it was not me. Remained only Bibi-Ri. And in truth, he it was: though the fact appeared as one of those momentary incredibilities of intercourse.

"Zelie!"

Now I cannot pretend to know what lay in the mind of that young girl. Who could plumb such a depth? She had kept herself inscrutable. How she actually felt toward Bibi-Ri I had no guess. She had seen him pared like a carrot—humiliated as few could be—his little human folly and weakness exposed, his grand hopes and aspirations made sordid and slimy. Even his one effort, his scheme of shuffling her away into a convent which must have seemed the sorriest cowardice, had surprised no motion from her. But how she regarded him now was plain. In the slow lift of her head, the heavy glitter of her eyes—plain to read.

"Zelie," he said. "You can't go on with it."

"No?" she inquired. . . . "No?"

Some way or other he had taken up position between the door and the stairs. . . . Oh, not with any sort of flash heroism—understand me. I am not giving you a *feuilleton* of melodrama. But there he put himself and there he stayed.

Of course that brute Bombiste had bristled at the first interruption. With a sign Zelie checked him short. . . . She was ready for Bibi-Ri. She had been waiting for Bibi-Ri. One knew it. One knew this to be their real meeting, and finally one knew who was and who had been his real opponent. Here the issue

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was joined. Between the dream and the girl—as you might say—here stood the Red Mark.

"You can't go on with it," he repeated in a voice, after all emotions, that had become almost matter of fact. "It is unthinkable. You will not touch those presents."

"I wonder if I won't," she answered.

"They were stolen from dead men——"

"Not so wicked as stealing heart and faith," she said.

"For this crime: worse than murder——"

"Not so bad as killing a soul given into your hand," she said.

"By a man the lowest of assassins!"

"Not so low," she said, "but that you claim his name, his blood and his fortune for your own!"

Ah, they were striking at each other's naked breasts, those two. With naked weapons. And neither of them shirked it. Not the girl, who sent back as good as she got—not Bibi-Ri, who took even that last terrible thrust.

"Such things do not happen." You would have thought he was putting a form of statement. "All else aside—" he said, "all else aside, this does not happen."

"What can you do or say to prevent?" she asked, leading him by so much.

"Anything you want of me."

"I want nothing: it would only be false."

"Anything you want me to say."

"I want to hear nothing: it would only be lies."

"Zelie," he offered, "will you marry me?"

That must have been the test, you know. In the covert, unproclaimed struggle which had brought them both to this pass, that must have been the gauge. Whatever thrill of satisfied passionate resentment she could have wished must have been hers there and then.

"Will you wed with me, Zelie?"

An exultant throb escaped her.

"Too late!" she said.

But he was beyond flinching.

"Let me be sure," he begged. "I was wrong, Zelie. I was blind and mad and heartless. I say so. But I give it up—I give up all that foolish gilded fancy of mine, for I see what true treasure it cost me. . . . Or look—*petite*—I give it up to you and we go seek the future together. Heaven knows if it could ever be any worth to us after—after tonight. But it's all I have. Zelie . . . take it for my wedding gift!"

She looked him up and down, long and steadily.

"Comedian!" she said. . . .

Well—it was rather hard. What? To twit that poor player at life with his poor playing. At his last and best not to believe him. At his supreme attempt to throw in his teeth that supreme mockery. Rather hard. In effect!

It left him dumb—and again across the pause, from somewhere outside, cut a shrill, thin whistle. Again came floating in among us, from nowhere at all, the spectral guardian of the gates: Carron. Again from a voice like a piping wind at a keyhole, we heard the news.

"Father Anselm has arrived. He is in the *basse-cour*, with the other priest. Also two sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny, who came with him."

"Father Anselm!" echoed Mother Carron, dully, in a sort of groan. "So much for my plan. . . . And the sisters? . . . So much for Bibi's! We're all finely cooked, the lot of us!" But even in disaster she could keep the uses of habit. "Sacred pig, you take your own time!" she scolded. "Was that your signal?"

"Not for them," sighed Carron. "We gave no signal for them, seeing who they were. But a carriole is climbing by the road——"

In fact through the heavy tropic night and the open doorway there reached our ears as we hearkened a grind of wheels, the muffled jolting of a cart.

"Two militaires on the driver's seat," continued Carron, unhurried, unvarying. "And inside—another man: a man in a black coat. The runner who brought word is not quite sure, but he thinks——"

"Eh?"

"It is M. de Nou!"

So once more, to clinch the tragedy, there befell that phrase so often repeated: and this time like the summons of fate, this time invoking the very presence of the monster himself, soon to descend upon us. Bombiste gave an obscene chuckle. He had been wriggling and scowling these last few tense moments in a furious temper at the neglect of himself and his black box. But I think no one else in the room drew breath until Mother Carron, with a remnant of vigour, summed the whole desperate business and spread it in a sweep to Bibi-Ri and cried, as she had cried before——

"What are you going to do about it now?"

Bibi-Ri fell back three paces to the archway. He drew the door shut. He swung into place the bar. Then he walked over toward the foot of the stairs.

It had been my share, if you have followed me, to see many curious changes wrought upon my luckless friend during some few hours. It was my fortune at the end to see him himself. Simply. The proper spirit of a man rising to a situation no longer tolerable. Figure to yourself this eager little chap: high-keyed, timid, fervid: something of a buffoon, always a victim of his perceptions. Do you remember that cry of his when he spoke of his coming release? "Able to taste it," he had said. What do you suppose he must have been tasting at this crisis? Such a perceptive, whimsical poor devil! . . . But yet capable of an ultimate gesture as far above bitterness as above rage or despair.

"Why," he said, with his wry smile that I knew so well and from all his little height, "why—since I can't play any other, it seems I have one part left in my repertoire. . . . I can still play the gentleman!"

Deliberately, giving no other warning, he struck from the hand of Bombiste the black leather box—dashed it far away into the fireplace. With an inhuman scream the Pole jumped for his throat. They locked. And the rest was convulsion.

How long it took I cannot tell. Nor yet exactly how it was done. A darkness seemed to descend about them. They fought as it might have been through a

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gap in time and space: I watched them reeling in a dim immensity. At some point I was aware of a thundering and a hammering from the outer limits. . . . At another I had some idiotic impulse to plunge into the fray myself, to aid my friend. But one glimpse of his face, caught as a blink through the whirl of things, was enough to throw me back out of that.

Himself, he had no fury. I mean, none of the heedlessness of a man merely berserk. While they revolved in their course together like a many-limbed polyp, the Pole ravened with ceaseless and bestial ululation. Bibi-Ri never uttered a sound. Little aid he needed! I swear to you he was still smiling. He kept on smiling with a set and implacable and dreadful pleasantry.

And good reason he had to smile, since that was his humour. For just then by a masterly wrench of wrist over neck he had sent Bombiste's knife spinning from his grip like a red-winged dragonfly. . . . Soon afterward I heard a bone snap. . . . I had forgotten, you see, that while he might be the Red Mark he was not called Bibi-Ri for nothing. I had forgotten that while he might establish his claim to the belated title of a gentleman, for some twenty-odd years of his life he had been acquiring the recondite arts of the Parisian apache!

To say the less of it: by those lights he accomplished the job. In the manner of the *voyou* and the garroter. In a merciful obscurity. Between his hands. Between his fingers. With precision and dispatch. He broke that creature Bombiste the way you would break a bread-straw. Until their last smashing fall, when the Pole was somehow horribly twisted downward underneath, when his clamour shut off suddenly like a stream at the tap, when he rolled on the floor an inert bundle. . . .

And we were back in the smoky kitchen. . . .

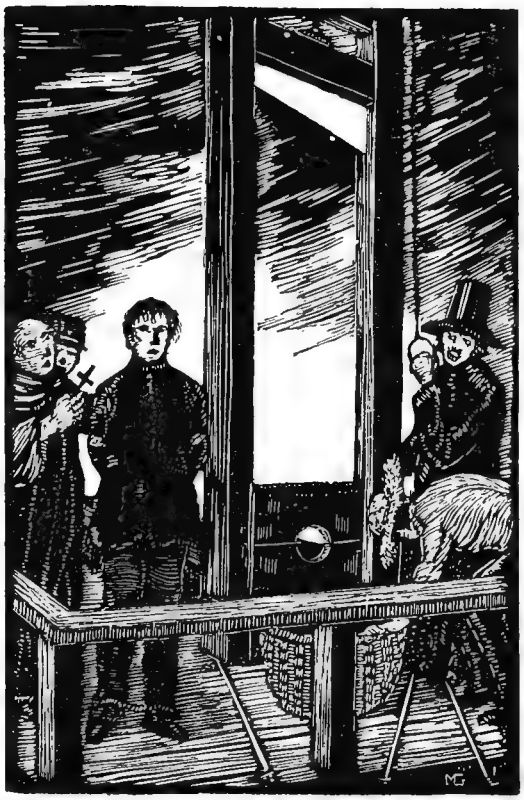
Voices were crying: figures shifting. The barred door seemed ready to crack under assault. One fat and snuffy priest had come chattering like a parrot. One gaunt and iron priest had gone sweeping forward to kneel by the dead and his duty. Two sad-robed sisters looked on with the placidity of canvas saints. Mother Carron was roaring. Carron himself flitted about with a lantern like a will o' the wisp whose tremulous flare shot the firelight with pallid citrine. It served at least to show the singular tableau at the foot of the stairs where Bibi-Ri had picked himself up.

A gladiator in the arena might have turned to Cæsar as he turned to the girl on her pedestal. He was stripped to the waist, his jacket in shreds, his compact torso white and gleaming. And there we could see—anyone might have seen who knew and was minded—the curious scarlet line of the birthmark about his neck which had shaped his destiny for him to this very moment: the Red Mark.

"Do you believe me now?" asked Bibi-Ri.

Wide-eyed, she stood at gaze.

"Will you believe me now?" asked Bibi-Ri.



He climbed the scaffold . . . and took his final look on life.

As the child in the fairy tale when the ice fell away from about her heart: so with Zelie. The steeled, unnatural restraint dropped from her. The quivering pulse sprang in her veins. She swayed toward him.

"Bibi—what have you done? Your chance! . . . Fly while you can!"

"Too late," he said, in his turn.

"But the heritage—your great future! Your riches! Your happiness! Nothing counts but that! . . . Name of God, you've lost it!"

"I find this better: to have you think kindly of it once—and of me."

"What else should I think of?" And oh, the impassioned miracle of her voice! ". . . It is your right. You should have it—you must have it, yourself, in freedom, without hindrance! For that I would have given anything—everything. For that I tried to drive you away!"

"Zelie!" he cried, in wonder. "Is this true? Did you feel so? . . . It was for my sake!"

"What else? . . . Though it tore me: though I died for it! I was not fit for you, but you should have your desire and I could help—a little, however little—to set you on the road. I could free you from danger of Maman—her blackmailing. For always. It was my own hope. But now—!"

She must have fallen if he had not caught her. And that was the way of it at long end. She loved him. They loved. The convict and the daughter of convicts: lovers of New Caledonia. With what sombre consummation!

"But you must escape!" she gasped. The knocking at the door was like to splinter the panels. "There may yet be time. . . . The militaires are coming! Be quick!"

He shook his head.

"It will not do, little one," he answered. "Useless. I should only be run down by black trackers. No. For me, it is finished. . . . But I am quite content."

"If you are taken it means death! . . . and mine!"

"No. Not that, either. You owe me, perhaps, one promise."

"Anything you want of me!"

"I bind you to it!"

"Anything you want me to say!"

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"Then you will not die: and you will save yourself from worse than death the only way still open. . . . These good sisters are waiting here for you. Do you understand?"

"I understand!" she sobbed, through her weeping. "I am yours . . . I promise! . . . Only kiss me once!"

It was Mother Carron who recovered some sort of sanity first among us. It was Mother Carron who gathered the fainting girl and passed her over to the charge of the nuns; Mother Carron who had forethought to snatch one of Carron's jackets from a hook; Mother Carron, finally, who slipped that jacket onto Bibi-Ri and buttoned it carefully to the chin before she would order the door unbarred.

"Well, well—so we land her in the church after all," observed that remarkable woman briskly, at the last. "*Chouette, alors!* It is honest, at least. . . . And now, stupid, open up and admit the happy bridegroom and let him see what he can see!"

He saw, right enough. He saw as much as was needful. When the door thrust inward, when his two rogue friends of military surveillants rushed through, when that tall devil in long black redingote and high hat, with his flaming yellow eyes and raging front—when M. de Nou himself, I say, confronted us—there we were properly ranged as the actors in a perfectly obvious police case of brawl and murder: prisoner, witnesses, corpus delicti and the succoring clergy.

"What does this mean?" he demanded.

Bibi-Ri faced him—a strange meeting, in truth!

"Me," he said, with his old trick of whimsy. "Only me. Convict 2232. I've been developing my capabilities a little. . . . That's all!"

So they guillotined Bibi-Ri. In due course, by due process, he passed before the Marine Tribunal, before the Commandant and the Procurator General and the Director and the rest of our salaried philanthropists. They dealt with him faithfully, and of a gray early morning they led him from the little door of the condemned cell. They marched him out with his legs hobbled and his hands tied behind his back; with the chaplain tottering at his side and the bayonets of the guard shining martially file and file: with some of the chiefest of these judges to receive him and some hundreds of us convicts drawn up below to do him honour.

Such was the method of his elevation, you will perceive: such the means by which he attained his ambitions, his uplifted position in the world—when he climbed the scaffold in the courtyard of the central prison on Île de Nou and took his final look on life.

I was there. For my complicity at Mother Carron's that night and my refusal to testify at the trial they had shipped me back to the Collective. I stood in the front row. I was among those felons whose special privilege is their compulsory attendance at executions. I could miss nothing. Not a word nor a movement. Not the hurried mumbling of the death sentence. Not the ruffling of the drums that covered the fatal preparations. . . . Not even the icy chill to the marrow when we sank there in our ranks on the damp flagstones.

"Convicts: on your knees! Hats off!"

Just as well for me I was allowed to kneel, perhaps. . . . Never mind. . . . It does not bear talking of. Except one thing. One thing I recall to comfort me, as I saw it through a mist of tears, wrung with pity and with awe. And that was Bibi-Ri's last salute to my address before they lashed him on the bascule, under the knife. . . . He smiled at me, the little fellow. Even gaily. Bidding me note as plain as words how he held fast his good courage, how he had kept his counsel and his great secret in prison and would keep them to the end. How he apprehended and viewed clear-eyed the inconceivable grim jest of the family party there on the scaffold: himself and the executioner!

Then he looked away across the harbour, toward the anchorage, and he did not shift his gaze again from that goal of Nouméa. Taking his farewell, Monsieur. Taking his farewell in spirit and quite content, as he had said, I do believe. For this was the day, this the very morning, when the steamer left Nouméa bearing his beloved Zelie for home. . . .

And one other thing I can tell you, crisp and clear. Do you remember when I began I said I had evened the score against M. de Nou? Evened it for always, until that fiend shall be dragged to the nethermost level of hell and earn his reward? Evened it the only way it could be evened on this side of the grave? . . . And so I did. Never was such an evening! Listen:

Ask me not how it was done, by aid of what obscure pressure, through what underground channels. But the miniature—the miniature of Bibi-Ri! You recollect? Somehow, Monsieur—somehow, I say—it found its way into the panier with the head of Bibi-Ri. Somehow the new assistant, Bombiste's successor, discovered it when he "robbed the basket"—when he stooped to gather the little perquisites of office for his master. And somehow and finally it was laid straightway in the palm of M. de Nou. . . .

He glanced at it. I saw him start. I saw him stare. I saw him stand and stand and still stare. I saw him lose bit by bit that shell of damnable pride, that prop of untouched and unrelenting hatred and contempt which was and which had been through all his years, his evil support. . . . He gave a movement, of horror, of growing terror. He stepped over. And he looked into the basket at his handiwork still lying there. He looked and he looked. But he could not know. He cannot know. He can never, never know, Monsieur. . . . For the red mark about that severed neck was all one red mark—do you see?—and the Red Mark remains a mystery forever!

"You gave me the key of your heart, my love;
Then why do you make me knock?"
"Oh, that was yesterday, Saints above!
And last night—I changed the lock!"

John Boyle O'Reilly.

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So They Say

Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick:
in the Baccalaureate sermon delivered before the graduates of Vassar College

"The best work in the world is that done not for money, nor necessity, but for fun."

Astronomy Pupil:
when asked to name a star with a tail

"Rin-tin-tin."

Harold Jay Graham:
winner of the "New Republic's" essay contest, now doing post-graduate work in the University of California

"Culture is vague and foreign to the majority of us (students), brought up on Sunday comics, movies, and *Saturday Evening Posts,* in drab and smug middle-class homes . . . yet the present liberal arts college endeavours to transform us into scholars and gentlemen. . . . We are exposed for four years to lectures on Plato and Popular Astronomy, Roman History, and Contemporary Poetry. . . . Consequently most of us are stricken with a sort of intellectual paralysis. . . ."

Henry Goddard Leach:
Editor of the "Forum"

"In the proper use of leisure time, the American people are the most infantile, unprogressive, and stupid of all the peoples on earth."

The Rev. the Hon. Edward Lytton:
of England

"A faddist is a man who, on a point of not first-class importance, thinks and acts differently from the majority."

Vermont Supreme Court:
hearing a suit regarding a frankfurter stand

"We have had occasion during the course of this opening frequently to refer to a viand known as a 'hot dog.' . . . For the sake of the fastidious it might be remarked that the name does not imply a canine derivative."

John H. Wigmore:
Dean of Northwestern University Law School, advocates dispensing with the U. S. Senate

"What this country needs is a constitutional Mussolini."

Elmer Davis:
American author, in the "Saturday Review of Literature"

"One type of fiction will never be old stuff, when it is well done; but to do it well requires more skill than the average author ever possessed. This is the novel as it originally was, as it usually has been in the hands of the greatest masters—Tolstoy, Fielding, Dickens, and Thackeray at their best; the novel that depicts character and manners, that paints a picture of life as illumined and dignified by the insight of the author."

Lieut.-Gov. Herbert H. Lehman:
of New York State

"You can't run a government solely on a business basis. . . . Government should be human. It should have a heart."

Judge Learned Hand:
of New York

"I know for myself, although all my traditions oppose it, that after a particularly blood-thirsty murder or robbery in the streets of New York, something explodes within me which demands summary and bloody vengeance."

Amateur Author:
submitting her first manuscript to a prominent publisher, expresses her willingness to compose the "blurb" too

". . . And I should be very glad to write the blubber on the jacket."

Charles J. Finger:
in an article on "The Easeful Executive" in the "American Mercury"

"The pages of history known to careful readers are crowded with records of kings, presidents, masters of men, warriors, statesmen, and others who in their heyday battered and bumped people into activity, but once shorn of power were unable to make a living and died in poverty."

Professor Henri Baptiste Passat:
successor to the late Dr. Coué, is founding a "pink" cult in France

"If a man entered a woman's house with the intention of murdering her, he would not be able to do so if she wore a light pink dress."

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ALBERT PARSON SACHS:
Science Editor, New York "World," discourses on fasting, starvation, fashions, and folly

"The fact that a healthy person can fast for three weeks or more, feel better and experience a type of psychic exaltation, allied in certain respects to insanity . . . is a tribute to his endurance and to the wonderful power of the human body to surmount adverse conditions. It is no proof that fasting is beneficial. . . . If an elephant should decide that he preferred to have the slender body of a giraffe, we should laugh and continue giving him his quota of hay. . . ."

T. R. YBARRA:
American writer in Paris, accuses the American tourist of importing too many improvements and thus destroying Bohemia

"Art cannot live beside a tiled bath; inspiration is stifled by steam heat; love flies out of the window of a room containing a telephone."

LONDON "OPINION":

"Bigamy is having one wife too many. Monogamy in certain instances is the same thing."

PROFESSOR ROBERT E. ROGERS:
of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, addresses a graduating class

"Every one of you has the ability to belong to a small aristocracy, an aristocracy that college men ought to be. . . . You cannot go on the assumption that you are as good as the rest of folks. You should take the attitude that you are a damned sight better. . . . You have got to take the rule away from the bootlegger, the politician, and the man who came up from one suspender button."

GILBERT SELDES:
writer and critic

"If you like wise-cracking, it's because you have a mean nature; if you hate it, it's because you have an inferiority complex; and if you judge a wise-crack by its wisdom instead of by its crack, you are lonely seven days a week."

OSBERT SITWELL:
young English poet, goes in for portrait-painting and has a first "sitter"

"You must submit to a certain amount of cross-examination. Let's begin by talking of—politics, psychoanalysis, your pet recreation, your favourite picture. . . . Let me close my eyes and listen to the rhythm of your voice."

SENATOR ROBERT WAGNER:
of New York

"What purpose is served by refusing to recognize that there are laws on the statute books which for one reason or another are either unenforced or unenforceable, and that many of them die before they are actually repealed?"

GLENN FRANK:
President of the University of Wisconsin, deplores the dearth of general medical practitioners

"The general practitioner has a chance to study disease that never comes to the specialist. . . . When all is said and done, the doctor must treat patients, not parts of patients."

CALVIN COOLIDGE:

"The doctrine of the survival of the fittest is an attractive theory, but I doubt if any people ever declined because they did not go to war often enough."

LLOYD GEORGE:
in the recent election, blaming his political opponent for the absence of footpaths in Wales—

"I would condemn Winston Churchill to push a perambulator for a whole month along a road without any footpaths."

JAMES TRUSLOW ADAMS:
writer

"There are obviously two educations. One should teach us how to make a living and the other how to live."

PRINCESS ILEANA:
of Rumania

"It is not easy for a girl to get married today even if she is a princess."

CHARLES GATES DAWES:
newly-appointed ambassador to Great Britain

"I consider that the time of the old-fashioned diplomat is over, and that people like myself, who are not careerists, should have an opportunity for settling the affairs of the world."

E. H. H. SIMMONS:
president of the New York Stock Exchange

"It is frankly to be admitted that speculation, like every other good and necessary thing in the world, can be overdone. . . . But the pious wish which some one has recently uttered that 'we ought to put the fear of God into the American security speculator,' seems to me rather peculiarly short-sighted. It is perhaps worth while to remark that, after all, the United States of America was not built by pawnbrokers."

EDWARD GREENOUGH:
of Cleveland, returning from Europe, is asked if he saw much poverty there

"Yes, indeed. A lot. In fact, I brought some back with me."

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By
HENRY
WALLACE
PHILLIPS

Linoleum Cuts by
Carroll Holliday

Aunt Johanna

H. W. Phillips.

Well (said Red Saunders), for a little side-issue, I like Aunt Johanna. She come upon us like an angel unawares. And if I must be come upon by an angel, give me the unaware variety—there's something about a wary angel contradictory and unpleasing to one's ideas: it suggests doing the thing for profit.

To show how thorough Aunt Johanna was in the unawares way of doing, figure for yourself an angel that stood about five foot high and weighed two hundred, with feet at one end and a hat on the other, and plenty of Aunt Johanna in the middle. I mention those things that struck the eye first. The feet, as is common with feet, were housed in shoes, with soles an inch thick—I mean the shoes and not the inch thick was common. I liked those feet: they showed a free and generous nature.

'Twas a tidy little hat she wore, made of two poll-parrots and a flamingo fighting it out to the death in a rolling sea of yaller-green shiny stuff. You could hear that hat in a Democratic convention. A tasty little suit of green-and-red-striped truck sot off her figger to grand advantage.

She wore specs the size of a butter dish, and about as thick, and those eyes of hers, magnified by them glasses, looked out at you big as eggs. And they looked wholesome as eggs. It ain't poetic to compare a lady's eyes to eggs, but there's meat and strength, and the germ of something in an egg, and not every eye, male or female, has those qualities.

How come Aunt Johanna to be among us? 'Twas like this.

Jimmy Arbuth was the first married rancher in the country—that is, *new* married, for the old timers, that come with their wives, had pardners as square and reliable as any man. Jimmy was the first to import a wife, and, of course, I had to go work for him, out of curiosity.

Amelia, the aforesaid wife, was one of these here soulful, sympathetic women—the kind that had rather look sad than work, any time. At first you'd think she took the whole earth to her bosom, but when you got on to her game, you could see that first, last, and middling, right, left, up, down, sideways, north, south, east, west, inside and outside, she sympathized with Amelia. I have seen tears of compassion start to her eyes from the sight of a doodle-bug squashed under the cruel foot of man, but I never see any feelings of any kind on her face at the sight of a man who had to suffer under Amelia's cookery. She would waste a whole day mourning over the state of widder-women in India, but she had not ten seconds to spare for the Art of Flap-jack making for a bunch of American bachelors.

There's no athletic sport so easy as weeping, and nothing that gets the good will of the neighbours so cheap, until they drop to it.

Jim stuck to his bargain manful, but she used to have him wild about the eyes at times. There was a mean streak in her; she'd land on his pet sore spot, not scrapping, but so gentle and so sympathetic that you'd hardly suspect that she was rubbing salt and pepper into the cut.

Jim knew a lot of Amelia's back-east relations, and

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he had no earthly use for them. As a matter of fact, Amelia wasn't a spring-chicken, and that bunch was mighty glad to see her gather a man that could take care of her, and lift the expense off their hands, but they weren't men enough nor women enough to use him decent when he come to get spliced. They tried to show they were doing him a great favour in speaking to him at all. So Jim had a little hand-to-hand talk with Amelia before the ceremony, and gave her to understand he was marrying into her family at the rate of one at a time. She agreed, of course, as Jim was the last hope, but she didn't live up to the agreement. No. At breakfast her gentle eyes would begin to fill with tears, and when Jim asked her what was now loose she'd reply "Nothing! Nothing!" and wipe away the tear. After long questioning, it would turn out that it was her dear, distant relatives that moved her so. Now, Jim hadn't the slightest objection to her visiting her D.D. relatives. Wanitchee! Not for a ten-year trip, if she wanted it; but Amelia was too damned lazy for that—what she wanted was to square herself with them with the least possible exertion to Amelia. She'd work it around to the point where it would seem Jim's duty to invite a hunk of the D.D.'s out to the ranch. He did it once. Mr. Brush and his esteemed wife arrived. They didn't approve of Dakota from the start, and Mrs. Brush used to lay abed until ten o'clock whilst Amelia waited on her. Amelia wouldn't have stood for it a minute, but she see it bothered Jim. Then Mr. Brush left his shoes out for Cock-eyed Ferguson to black, and I set on Cock-eye personally while the rest tied him with ropes and took word to Jim to get his relatives-in-law away from there before we let Ferguson loose. The relatives left. You couldn't monkey with Jim too far, and to offer a boot-blacking job to a man that had stood between him and trouble more than once was about the limit. The Brushes had other pleasant habits, but those are the things that stick most in my mind. After that Jim announced in a loud voice that he coppered all relatives. But Amelia, with the tears trickling down her face, would knock the sand out of anybody. It was a case of constant dripping wearing the rock; besides, when she got melancholy, hell looked bright and pleasant alongside that ranch. What sense is there in a woman acting that way? Just making everybody miserable for the fun of it? Still, I suppose if the average young man was raised to do nothing but sit around waiting to get married off, he wouldn't be such a much by the time he was thirty-odd, neither. Come to think of it, the women show up good, considering the rotten training they have.

Well, Amelia got to howling for a sight of her dear Aunt Johanna, and Jim threw an Apache fit at first, for even Amelia's other relatives gave Aunt Johanna the tom-tom. He argued and he talked decent; he cussed and he fumed; he even went so far as to beg; but Amelia, seeing she had him on the run, just looked like an early Christian martyr and stuck to the job, until Jim says to me one day:

"I pass it up, Red. I've sent word for the old lady to come. She can't add anything to the trouble here, that's a cinch. I might as well have two of 'em as one. Mebbe it will be a diversion."

So here come Aunt Johanna.

It was a nice morning I went to meet her, with the babies fit and keen for the forty mile to the railroad. Besides, the road was good, and I'd sneaked out and cooked Jim and me a bit of breakfast, behind the colt pens, where Amelia couldn't see us. So with a beltful, a good breeze, and a good road, I looked at things from a warm point of view, and, I says to myself, the very fact that the rest of the bunch knock the old lady may prove she ain't so bad. You couldn't get better praise than the curses of some folks. And besides, with a hundred-mile view scattered around you, you can't stay hopeless long.

I pulled up alongside the platform just as the engine come hissing and roaring in, shaking the solid earth beneath her. She looks good to you once in a while, the engine does.

Well, here comes an elderly stout party dressed as I've described, and looks about her, brisk and sure. When her eye lit on me she stared for a minute, and then poked at me with her green umberel'!

"Hey there, sonny! Are you the young man they sent to meet me?"

"Yessum," says I. 'Twas a long time since anyone had called me "sonny."

"Well, then," says she, "let's get a hustle on! Say!" to Pete in the freight room. "Get them trunks along, young man; we want to move!"

Then she sat down on a box and pulled two big red apples from her pocket. "Have one?" says she, and chucked it over to me. I hadn't had a good red apple in—well, the Lord knows how long, and the juice of that went sizzling down my throat. I just wolfed it, it tasted so good. And it kinder brought some old news back to my mind—I saw an old orchard— Oh, well, a man's in poor shape when he gets to seeing things on an apple that ain't even cider yet.

We sat there and swung our legs and munched our apples, while Pete rustled trunks and began making remarks about my not helping him.

"Your business, young man! Your business!" says she, and waves the green umberel'!

"Yessum," says Peter, and hustles without more argument. She had a way of telling you what to do that didn't admit of argument.

Aunt Johanna and me hopped into the buckboard and was off and away in jig-time.

"What might your name be, young man?" she asked me.

"Bill Saunders—Red Saunders." The old lady looked off in the distance. "I s'pose," she says, "they call you 'Red'—" here she stopped and I kinder begun to get my back up—I ain't stuck on people throwing the colour of my hair at me—"They call you 'Red,'" she says, "because of your rosy complexion?" I looked mighty hard at her. "Yes," says I, "that's it—*ex*-actly!"

And she begun to laugh. "Tell me honest," she says, "did you ever meet up with a red-headed person who wouldn't get mad if you mentioned their hair?"

Then I began to laugh, and said I hadn't, and me and Aunt Johanna was on a friendly basis. It weren't any time before she wanted to drive. Now, you

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couldn't ask for a nicer little pair than Bud and Dandy—there weren't no real sin in 'em—but they was three-year-olds, and a forty-mile trip, going along easy, was just enough to wake 'em up, and make 'em playful. So I kinder hesitated. "Sonny!" says Aunt Johanna, "Don't fear, but hand me them lines."

"All right, now!" I says, "but if anything happens, your blood be on your own sun-bonnet!"

She said nothing, but gathered up the ribbons like a horse-jockey, and believe what I'm telling you! With the whip in her good right hand and the brake under her good right foot, Aunt Johanna tooled them babies up hill and down in a way to make a Black Hills stage driver look. She chuckled in her fat neck when she see how surprised I was.

"Born and raised in a colt pen, boy!" says she, "I could live on oats or mares' milk, either one, but I *can't* eat hay."

She sure was some surprising-looking old lady, with her riot-in-a-parrot-cage hat, and her big specs, driving away like somebody that's paid by the piece for it. And you bet, I liked her more'n more all the time. "Jeehosophat!" I thinks, "what made Amelia want her here? They don't rhyme no more than nothing."

As if she smelt what I was thinking of, she turns suddent, and says, "Everything mouldy about the ranch, I suppose?"

"How's that?" I says.

"Why, the place is rank with mildew, ain't it?"

"Excuse me," I says, "but you'll have to flag again—I've missed your train of thought."

"Amelia, man! Amelia!" she says, impatient. "She ain't dried up, has she?"

"Oh!" says I, flabbergasted: "Amelia! Yes, Mrs. Arbuth. Oh, yes! Why she—er-er—"

"Young man!" says Aunt Johanna, "Facts is facts, and facts is stubborn things, whereby they ain't got any edge on Amelia, whatsoever. Be she my niece, or be she tee-total stranger, I gotter say, she's positive the most aggervatin' critter anybody ever passed a line over, and don't you go for to try to be pretty because she's a lady, because she ain't. Now I ask you once more, ain't Amelia still a-sheddin' tears worse'n a pet tarrier sheds hairs?"

"Yessum!" I says—that's one of the best answers you could give Aunt Johanna—and usually it was the right answer, at that.

"Huh!" says Aunt Johanna, and give her attention to the team for a bit. "You Buddy Hawss!" says she. "Come up on the traces, there! And quit a-cheatin', Dandy! Foxy little critter, that Bud, ain't he? Likes to run on the level and lay back on the hills. Well," says she, as she give Mister Bud a taste of the bud, "they don't always work that on your Aunt Johanna!" Then she swung to the subject that was really on her mind.

"She was always like that, Amelia. The hull darn universe just sot up nights lookin' to do her harm—that no account slimpsey-jimpsey little bag-o'-bones! Her Ma used to bring her over to my house when she was a little girl. I had a hull attic full of dolls, dolls' houses and hobbyhorses and truck, to make a decent child think it had landed in Heaven. But Amelia? D'ye think she played with 'em? Not she! She waited till lunch time, and then cried all over my nice clean napkins and tablecloth, because she felt so sorry for the poor heathen! 'Joe,' says her mother to me, 'whatever do you suppose ails her? What am I to do with her?'

"Amelia's mother allus looked like a scart rooster dodgin' a pup, and she had just about the same amount of sense.

"'Well,' I says, 'Marie, I don't *know*, but you let me have Amelia for a minute, and I'll kinder *explain* to her—I can't see no just reason for her being sorry for the poor heathen on my nice clean table-linen.' So I took her out, and explained to her about the poor heathen with one of my house slippers—and I allus had room enough to stand on, when I was standing on my own feet. I explained it to her good and hard, and she was moderate cheerful after that, when she come to my house—that is, for Amelia. . . . You see," says Aunt Johanna, "they *gotter* give in to me. I've got all the money!"

"Ah!" says I, several different and assorted things becoming clear on the instant. "You give 'em the gold cure?"

"Right you are!" says Aunt Johanna. "You can bet if anybody with money or without ever talked to me as I talk to them, there'd be a corpse to show for it. But they ain't got no shame, so they deserve every bit of it. And I just sit up nights thinking of what I'll do to 'em next. I'm getting so I ain't got no shame, neither. Funny thing, though, that Amelia sent for me. She must just know she can't come nothing on me. I guess there ain't any body scars left, but on Amelia's lily-white soul there must remain some memory of when I explained to her about the poor heathen."

When we wheeled to take the last turn around the cotton-woods by the creek, I see a saddle horse just peeking his nose out from behind the calf-pens, and I realized Jimmy was hiding there, ready to make a quick getaway. So I waved my hand kinder careless as a signal that it was all right. I thought Aunt Johanna was looking straight ahead, but she caught me and asked so quick, "Who you signaling?" that I couldn't lie.

"Jimmy," says I, very meek.

"Was he goin' to run?"

"I think it likely."

"But you didn't think it necessary?"

"No'm!" says I.

"Red," says she, "you and me'll get along together like twins. Jim ain't got any cause to run, and that's a fact; but just that you've shown you understand me, I'm going to show 'em all what's trumps in this shack—Lordy! Lordy! There's Amelia now! Ready to spring a leak at a minute's notice! I'll beat her to it," says Aunt Johanna.

So when Amelia come out, looking like a moulting hen on a wet Sunday, all ready to grind out a bunch of sobs, Aunt Johanna hops out of the buckboard, falls on her neck and howls like a wolf! Lord! How a woman can counterplay a woman! Amelia's best yelp was the squeak of a rubber doll agin a foghorn, compared to Aunt Johanna.

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The boys, lined up for the arrival, looked half scart, till I explained to them on the way to the bull-pen. And I met up with Jimmy and made things clear to him.

Well, sir, Aunt Johanna must have made medicine for Amelia from the jump, for that very afternoon, instead of sitting around and being company, the old lady shucks her fireworks make-up and tries the commissary department, working both hands like one, for there come a spell of things to eat, and the sight of a bustling in that kitchen, the like of which was never known before: and through the banging and the slattering of pans and tins you could hear Aunt Johanna singing her one and only song.

"'Tis the o-o-o-old shi-i-i-yip of Zion, hally-loo-Yah!" The way she come out with that "Yah" at the end made poor old Mose, Jim's pointer dog, go a foot in the air with his hindquarters every time. He was a nervous old devil, and that "Yah" was a specialty with the old lady.

And that night, my boy, we sat down to the result. Let me dream again! There was doughnuts, biscuits, steak, steam-fried potatoes, fresh bread, pie—and everything! Just the kind that mother used to make when she was at her best. And we, that had starved on Amelia's blasphemies, just waved both arms like windmills, and the expression all the way 'round that table was something to really make Amelia weep. No more pale mush, that should ha' been took through a tube: no more bread like the sawed-off end of a cottonwood log; no more biscuits that would do for ammunition for a mountain howitzer: Wanitchee! Here was food!

Jim comes out like a sunrise—told stories and laughed and carried on like a boy. And the other fellers blossomed a bit too, so, take it by-and-large, it was a champion meal. There was only one hitch. Of course, Amelia didn't approve of all this. You can't be fond of the heathen and enjoy seeing your own folk happy at the same time, it seems. She waited for a pause, and then said in her most cultivated manner and most chilling tones, "What books have you been reading this summer, Aunt Johanna?"

The old lady dropped her knife and fork and fastened Amelia with her eye. "Cook books, Amelia!" says she: and after that you could have heard most anything drop. But we didn't hear anything out of Amelia.

WELL, SIR, AUNT JOHANNA fitted into ranch life. She sized up the colts and gave advice. Seems she knew pigs and calves and all kinds of critters—I mean she really *did* know. One cow had been ailing ever since she was snake bit—one of Jim's few blooded animals. He had had a veterinary down—that is, he said he was a veterinary, but we all guessed he was only a veteran—and he didn't help none, but our only Aunt Johanna wrote out a medicine, and Jim got it fixed at the drug-store, and Mrs. Cow soon flew around as chipper as a calf.

Then Aunt Johanna took to bloomers and riding astride, and Uncle Red piloted her around the country. It will give you some idea how much I thought of her, that I didn't unload that job on some of the younger boys, for she sure was a dream in her riding clothes! They got the fattest pair of overalls to be found, and trimmed 'em here and there to suit her. On top she wore an old broad-brim, tied with a green veil. One of my best friends passed without speaking one day. Soon as he was by, he kept a-staring till I rode back and said to him, "Look here, Bill! Ain't you any more manners than to stare like that at a lady?"

"Moses! Red, hello!" says he. "I didn't even notice you! So it's a lady, is it? Well, sir, you could have won any bet you liked off'n me on that question."

But Aunt Johanna and me, we had some of the finest talks out. We just went to the bottom of everything and settled it once for all every day fresh. I never come across anything more entertaining than she was in an argument. She pitched in so whole-souled and honest, beating the air with her fists and getting off some of the most comical remarks I ever heard.

We used to go for twenty-mile trips after she got wore down to riding. Jim give me full time off to show the old lady the best time possible, as you wouldn't hardly believe the difference in that ranch since the Art of Cookery broke in, let alone the fact that Amelia dassn't chirp. Seemed to me she was bottling up for a celebration, but, in the meantime, things slid along on the buttered side of prosperity. And then came the great event in the visit of Aunt Johanna.

When we were riding past a bit of Bad Lands, one day, I heard an owl hoot. Now, owls don't hoot a great deal in the daytime, unless they're Scotch by birth, and the little owls in a prairie dog town don't hoot—anyhow, it ain't much more than a chirrup. So, I says, when an owl hoots, when there ain't any owl to hoot, there must be some friend of mine that's done something he hadn't orter.

I excused myself to Aunt Johanna and slid along the sound, hooting like another owl, but at the same time keeping a leery hand on my gun, for there was a bucko around at this time who couldn't be got to appreciate me at my true worth, and he might be tolling me along to where he could shoot me real comfortable. But I see a dried stick popping up from behind a clump of Gumbo—a stick with three short branches—and that was the sign between Crazy Bull and me. You lick your hand and rub it in the dust, and then hold your fingers kinder stiff and crooked and it looks just like a dried branch.

Well, I threw sign to Bull that no danger was nigh and then had his story out of him. A short horse and soon curried. You see, he was one of old Sitting Bull's Dog Soldiers, renegade Injuns from every tribe in America, but not all bad boys, at that. Especially Crazy Bull. He was a great man among the Injun ladies, and so he was always on the run, with a husband or father or son or brother or another lady after him. To be popular among the ladies is almost like making little Susie Trouble an adopted sister. This time Bull got weary of hot-footing it and shot the outraged parties full of entirely convincing holes.

Sitting Bull tried to interfere to save him, but *his* credit never was very good along the Cannon-ball

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River, and it was Crazy Bull for the Bad Lands and Solitude.

I ask him what I could do for him, and he wanted word carried to Tatonkah-Eyokah—that's Sitting Bull—and he wanted grub, tobacco, and minnewaukon chescheela. I promised to take word to Tatonkah-Eyokah, to furnish grub and 'baccy, but I drew a firm line on furnishing whisky.

"Minnewaukon, Wanitch!" says I, "Tahko nea yappi, mea schlolalei; Kola! Nea Tatonkah Witkote-ko, shinto!"

Then, of course, I felt kinder mean at talking to a full-grown man that way, so I says, "Come on out till I introduce you to a white lady!"

I knew at the same time Aunt Johanna would be tickled into spasms at meeting a full-bloom Injun Bad Man, and to have a secret to keep—and there wasn't the slightest doubt about her being able to keep the secret. "Aunt Johanna," I says, "here's where you meet Crazy Bull—he's wanted for a killing, so please don't mention it. Tatonkah Witkote-Ko, shake hands with Aunt Johanna."

Bull didn't use a great deal of English, but he swung what he had polite and nice. Besides, he was a Jim-dandy, up-standing red man, taller than me, and full as broad, although he weighed less, and his legs and arms was finished up as neat as a rifle barrel, and the skin on him was like new silk.

I saw Aunt Johanna sizing him up unusual strong, but I didn't have the faintest notion I was starting up that Othello racket in a new rig. There was something about Aunt Johanna that was no kin at all to my notion of Desdemona. Yet what has that to do with anything? Why is it we figure that if a woman don't pretty up in the face, she has no right to get sentimental? What's a good-looking mug got to do with what you think and feel? Answer, you! Nothing, that's the answer! Yet every man-jack of us has his tee-hee on tap when a homely woman is mixed up in a love affair!

I've spoken of Aunt Johanna as an old lady. There's another misfortune of the poor in looks—you always call them old. As a matter of fact, she was under fifty, which ain't an old woman at all, when you're stout and healthy. No woman's old when she falls in love, anyhow. But I'm breaking brush ahead of the trail. Seeing Aunt Johanna was interested in the little stranger, I took her along each time. We lugged Bull tobacco and truck by the barrel. Amongst other things, pies—apple-pies—made by the good right hand of Aunt Johanna.

Some feller said words are the instruments of thought. Blame poor instruments, when a man thinks the thoughts I think, when I think of the pies of Aunt Johanna. Why, them pies were like the world's best romance, wrapped in a forty-horsepower sunset. One slice of that pie was equal to a love affair and two good bets on a horse-race. One bite of that pie and I would lend my worst enemy my brand new razor. Just to smell of it put me in such a frame of mind that Pete Skellet, the Alkali Poet, could read his product to me and go away without getting his hair mussed.

Now, if this was the effect on me, a well-fed Christian white man, what do you suppose them pies tasted like to a half-starved, heathen red Injun? Can't you imagine how easy he'd overlook any little defect as to eyes, feet, age, etc.? I can, when I look back. I can see that when you got genius—the real three-X, government inspected brand, you can be a cock-eyed deaf-mute with ten thumbs and a pair of left feet, and yet pull the object of your choice, be it he, she or it, as your sex may be.

Besides, the Injun has what's commonly looked upon as romantic so chucked at him from the first

We made a picture, the three of us playing poker for dear life, with the Bad Lands for background.

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yelp, that I reckon he gits a bit tired of it. His mother drops out of line for twenty minutes while he's getting born and then does a sprint, with him on her back, to join the procession. That's romantic—but not to an Injun—and he lives in the grand free out-of-doors, that freezes him in winter, roasts him in summer and drowns him in the spring, until a bit of a change don't go bad at all. It's only because all the talent an Injun's got is for out-doors, that he sticks to it. Out-of-doors is his trade. Anywheres else he's a hobo, till he gets the hang of it. That's what makes him leery of houses—it ain't that he's really got a passion for being uncomfortable.

Let me tell you, boy. It's the things we don't do; the things we ain't used to, that are romantic. And to an Injun that never see that soulful symphony of browns, the crust of a good apple-pie, with little streaks of candied juice sparkling here and there; that never smelled the same, and never crushed it against the roof of his mouth with his tongue, the Apple Pie has the pansy-eyed Albino, or the midnight-orbed dark lady of the story books, mashed to a shapeless pulp.

I'll bet you could stack up the beauties of the past two hundred years on the reservation, and Aunt Johanna would put them down for the count with a single pie.

This, as I have stated, I plainly see in looking backward. At the time, I was so busy smuggling stuff out from under the unkind eye of Amelia, and being sure that nobody piped my trail on the way to Bull, that I never give these fancies a thought. Indeed, if you got an order from the Court and searched my mind, the only idee on the subject you'd been able to find was the innocent joy I felt, at being so well disguised by the presence of Aunt Johanna.

I didn't know she was in the play at all. So things ambled for a while. To amuse our friend, we put a horse-blanket on the ground and played poker. Not for fun, neither—never! Aunt Johanna wasn't that kind of sport. We played five matches to a cent, and when Aunty got a set of threes she'd raise Bull and me out of our shoe leather. She didn't seem to sense the idee that the hands could go higher. We made a picture, the three of us playing poker for dear life, with the Bad Lands for background. The good old Bad Lands lying out there like the skeleton of everything that ever was. Clean, though. Dead, white-bleached, but clean. And one bad Injun, one red-headed cow-puncher, and Aunt Johanna! Yea, it was a scene!

Woodcut by M. J. Gallegher

How in thunder the pair managed to get planning with me right on the job, is more'n I'll ever tell you, but one day, after Aunt Johanna had cooked us the king-pin of all suppers, she ain't there: she's missing! And some of her clothes ain't there: nor is the horse she used to ride; gone too are three lovely pies she baked the night before.

All that's known to be left is two notes. One to Jim and one to Amelia.

When Jim opens his, a couple of yellowbacks fall to the ground and the letter knocks him so he don't stoop to pick 'em up. He hands me the note:

Dear Jim:

No fool like an old fool. I've skipped with the only man I ever liked. Enclosed will pay for the horse and buy a rattle for the baby. Keep Amelia jumping and she won't weep so much. God bless you and all the boys.

AUNT JOHANNA.

"Well!" says Jimmie. "Well!" says he. And then he says, "She had sense enough to grab what she wanted. I hope to the Good Lord she's happy."

And I said "Keno!" to that.

Amelia's note was a little different. Jim made a copy of it, and brought it out to me. It said:

Dear Amelia:

Full oft I have thought about your noble ideas concerning the heathen. To whom else could I now turn so sure of sympathy as you? I've got one of my own to feed and take care of. He stands six foot six on the soles of his feet, and he'd send Mr. John H. Dempsey to the repair shop if he took a dislike to him. That's the only kind of heathen I can stand for. Perhaps I can feed him into a Christian. We leave for parts unknown tomorrow.

We women should hold together for the right, Amelia, and if every darned cantankerous old maid should pick out a healthy heathen and fly with him, this world would be a better place. Don't fall down on the cookery, and I'll remember you in my will—honest. And besides, Jimmy is on to you now. He may light out with a lady heathen, if you put it on him too hard. Be good to the boys and they'll be happy.

AUNT JOHANNA.

There was one more little note. It was for me. I read:

Good-by, Red, and think kindly of a lonely old woman that never had a show. I won't forget you, and don't you dare forget me. Take the enclosed, fly to town, and have at least one parting drink with

Your own
AUNT JOHANNA.

The enclosed was a twenty—positively the only money I ever accepted from a lady.

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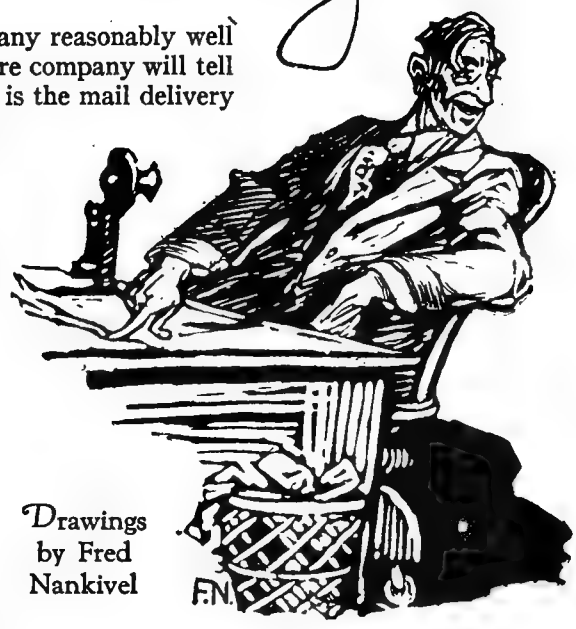
By PETER B. KYNE

The Society Bee

Peter B. Kyne



Drawings by Fred Nankivel

THE SCENARIO EDITOR of any reasonably well advertised motion picture company will tell you that meager indeed is the mail delivery that does not bring him a photoplay entitled "The Tangled Threads of Destiny," although very frequently an effort is made to disguise it under the caption "The Checkerboard of Fate."

Some of these scenarios are not really so impossible as they read. Take, for instance, the one about the man who, having partaken of two cocktails on an otherwise empty stomach, discovered on the bar what he believed to be a small piece of ice that had slipped out of the third cocktail, then in course of preparation. Thinking thus, and feeling parched within, he promptly swallowed it, only to discover that it was the barkeeper's diamond, which had fallen out of the latter's ring. Imagine the number of persons that may become affected by this trivial contretemps! The anguished barkeeper shouts "Thief!" The customer runs—for the receiving hospital; a policeman catches him; a crowd gathers; there is brisk work for doctors, nurses, lawyers, jailers, reporters, photographers——

But enough. To business! This is not a photoplay, but a plain tale of tangled threads. Hark to this recital of events, all unrelated, but which, nevertheless, form the basis of a singularly well connected story.

Mr. Jefferson P. Keeler, president of the P. Q. & R. Railroad, having decided to extend his line through Madrone County to tap a rich timber country, ordered his engineering department to survey the easiest, cheapest, and most practical route for the proposed extension. One of the chain-men in that surveying gang gave the quiet tip to his uncle, one Addison K. Haines, of Green Bay, Michigan. Mr. Haines was an extremely rich lumberman, who, seeing Michigan denuded of her timber, desired a gilt-edged investment in the West. Immediately upon receipt of the aforesaid tip, therefore, Addison K. Haines came West, investigated, purchased twenty townships of sugar, and white and yellow pine, erected a huge sawmill, a box factory, and a sash-and-door factory, and by his energy and foresight founded the flourishing town of Hainesville, Madrone County.

A lady applied for membership in the Escholtzia Club, the most exclusive women's organization west of the Rocky Mountains—and another lady black-balled her.

A floating labourer, by name Michael P. Kilfoyle, partook of a saucer of prunes in a South Side Chicago restaurant, and then rode a number of brake beams toward the setting sun. Unknown to him, he carried a prune stone in his cæcum. Two months later the unfortunate Michael still possessed it, while the gentleman who would not have known Michael from his own prune-stone, possessed Michael. He established title by the comparatively simple process of calling at the morgue of the City and County Hospital in San Francisco and identifying the body as that of a long-lost relative.

Mrs. Dionysius Pratt, wife of Di Pratt, justice of the peace in Hainesville, was quite in despair at her inability to select an unusual but dignified name for her last-born, a youth of six weeks and frequent colic. In the process of unwinding the tangled threads hereinbefore alluded to, this infant acquired, in proof of Mrs. Pratt's gratitude, the name of Tinker Pratt.

Justice of the Peace Pratt was in equal despair, but from a different cause. The meager fees from his moribund office were entirely disproportionate to the fecundity of Mrs. Pratt.

Mr. Thomas Loren Briggs, the rarest of God's works, an honest man, having served one term as district attorney of Madrone County, aspired to another, with but slight chance of achieving his ambition.

And lastly, Mr. Tiberius Tinker, one-time shyster lawyer and now known to fame as a fix-it specialist, took it upon himself to unravel all these tangled threads—and all for a most potent reason. His wife happened to be the lady who was black-balled at the Escholtzia Club.

As a result of Mr. Tinker's activities, old Jeff Keeler's plans were effectually blocked until he consented to do something for Tinker; Addison K. Haines also did something for Mr. Tinker, regardless of the

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pain; Mrs. Tinker was elected unanimously to membership in the Escholtzia Club; Thomas Loren Briggs won his election fight very handily; Michael P. Kilfoyle was saved from a dissecting room and received Christian burial; the worries of the Pratts were banished for four years, and since neither Mr. nor Mrs. Pratt could look farther than that into the future, we might as well remark right here that everything turned out happily for everybody with the exception of Mr. Tinker! Therein lies the story. Let us, with Mr. Tinker, proceed to unravel the snarl.

TIBERIUS TINKER, like Tommy Traddles, was drawing cats in red ink, having nothing else to do, when his wife burst into his private office.

A word here anent the lady. Mrs. Tinker was a splendid specimen of that type of American beauty known as a good scout. Prior to marrying Tiberius Tinker she had been his stenographer for many years, and had no illusions whatever concerning him. Full well she knew him to be the trickiest, slipperiest, most brilliant and affable legal burglar that ever picked a hole in the Code, but at the same time he was a loving and tender husband, and wholly devoted to his wife—in consequence of which she fled to him now to sob out her woe on his bosom.

"Oh, Tib," she wailed as he rose to greet her. She cast herself into the welcome haven of his arms. When she had cried herself out, he questioned her and learned that after six months of probation on the waiting list of the Escholtzia Club her application for membership had come before the Board of Directors that very afternoon, and the first vice-president, Mrs. Jefferson Peabody Keeler, had been observed to turn up her aristocratic nose as she dipped her hand in the ballot box and registered her vote by dropping a marble through a small, round hole into a drawer. Subsequently, when the president opened the ballot box, it was found to contain two black marbles; whereat Mrs. Atherton James remarked sweetly that she had feared all along poor dear Mrs. Tinker would be rejected because of her husband. There was so much scandalous talk going the rounds about him!

"I understand, Pearly," said Tinker. "In all probability she added that your husband was a shyster lawyer. Well, I suppose it can't be helped, sweetheart, although I do wish you had told me you were going into this club thing. It is barely possible I might have arranged to smooth the way for you. However, it's been so many years since I abandoned criminal practice that I suppose you had a reasonable right to think my past had been forgotten; but I suppose I'm a dog with a bad name, and it's going to stick to me. We'll have to grin and bear it, my love."

There was a greenish light flickering in Mr. Tinker's eyes as he said this, however, which to a critical observer would have indicated that he was fighting mad and had no intention of submitting gracefully. For he could hate well. To him the one sweet and holy thing in life was Mrs. Tinker; it racked his very soul to see her made unhappy, and even as he appeared resigned to the inevitable, his brain was busy devising ways and means to confound her enemies. Presently he thought he saw the light, for the greenish tinge faded from his eyes and he smiled whimsically.

"My dear," he said, "did I understand you to say that Mrs. Jefferson Peabody Keeler is the first vice-president of this cat show?"

Pearly nodded miserably. "Old Jeff Keeler's lady, eh?" Tinker continued reminiscently. "Well, I guess that means I'll have to go gunning for old Jeff. I take it that Mrs. Keeler is the logical candidate for president at the next club election?"

Pearly sobbed out an affirmative. "Buck up, my dear," her husband soothed, "and we'll see what can be done. If you desire to break through the Upper Crust, I suppose I can manage it—somehow. There's always a way, and I always find it; if it ruins me financially, I'll have you elected to membership in the Escholtzia Club, and old Jeff's lady shall make you a speech of welcome and give a tea-fight or something in your honour."

Pearly was comforted immediately, for she knew her husband's power. And she did not ask questions, for she had been his stenographer too long not to guess something of his *modus operandi*. He would "frame" something on old Jeff Keeler; then when he had that unfortunate where the hair was short, he would use him as a club to drive Mrs. Jeff into line; Mrs. Jeff would then drive the Escholtzia Club into line—and all would be merry as the proverbial marriage bell.

NEARLY A YEAR passed before Tiberius Tinker found the opportunity he sought. In the daily prints he read an announcement of the contemplated extension of the P. Q. & R. Railroad up through Madrone County. Old Jeff Keeler had given out an interview.

"I'll make you wish you hadn't," Tiberius Tinker murmured, and forthwith he departed for a tour of that section of Madrone County through which Jeff Keeler planned to extend the P. Q. & R. Then he returned to his office, sat down and waited. He had not long to wait. Before a month had passed, he had a visit from one Thomas J. Quigley, manager of the Maintenance of Way Department of the P. Q. & R. Railroad. Tinker greeted him cordially, indicated a chair, and waited for him to explain his business.

"Some time ago," began Mr. Quigley, "you acquired, by purchase from the Government, at a price of one dollar and twenty-five cents per acre, a narrow strip of land in Willow Pass, Madrone County. Simultaneously your wife acquired a similar strip. The land is perfectly worthless."

"Naturally," said Mr. Tinker, "one would scarcely select good agricultural land for a cemetery. Even with the fertilization which I plan——"

"Passing my natural inclination to satisfy my curiosity and ask you what under the canopy you mean by starting a cemetery in Willow Pass," Mr. Quigley interrupted, "I'll get down to the nubbin of my business with you. The P. Q. & R. plans to extend its line up country through the property of the Willow Pass Cemetery Association. I understand from a perusal of the records in the office of the secretary of state that you are the president of that corporation, that your wife is treasurer and your stenographer, Miss Kerwin, is secretary."

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"I can add a mite to that information," Mr. Tinker replied gravely. "I am the Willow Pass Cemetery Association. Mrs. Tinker and Miss Kerwin are merely dummy directors."

"Then I have come to the right shop for my information. Mr. Tinker, what is that right of way going to cost us?"

"My dear Mr. Quigley! Surely you are jesting!" Tiberius Tinker declared. "Why, the Willow Pass Cemetery Association could not possibly consider such a preposterous proposition. Think of the peaceful slumbers of the dead being disturbed by the wheels of commerce, the shriek of locomotives in the silent reaches of the night, and the bitter curses of the passenger engineer as he damns the freight that delayed him five minutes in Hainesville. My dear sir, did you ever hear of a railroad running through a cemetery? Why, Mr. Quigley, it isn't done!"

"It could be done," Quigley replied doggedly. "You haven't planted anybody there yet, so it isn't really a cemetery."

"You are mistaken, Mr. Quigley. The late Michael P. Kilfoyle was buried there last week. In fact, I have just ordered a neat tombstone for him."

"But dad ding it, man, you have land enough there to bury the entire German army. Why, you have eight hundred acres of cemetery, and there aren't fifty people residing within twenty miles of you."

"The Willow Pass Cemetery Association, Mr. Quigley, is not catering to the local trade. It is strictly a benevolent organization, which plans to provide, gratis, a quiet resting place for those world-weary pilgrims who pass from among us, unknown, unsung, and unwept——"

"You're kidding me!" Mr. Quigley declared. "There's something fishy about this whole game. Be frank with me, Mr. Tinker. What do you want us to do? The P. Q. & R. will do anything within reason rather than resort to condemnation proceedings."

"Mr. Quigley, I'm surprised at your ignorance. For your information, permit me to state that a cemetery is the one thing on this earth that time, tradition, human sentiment, and the law have rendered immune from condemnation proceedings. A cemetery, Mr. Quigley, is holy ground—yes, sir, holy ground! You can't go through our cemetery. You'll have to go around it—if you can!"

Quigley was sport enough to laugh. "Oh, I see," he said, "—a hold-up game?"

"I am making no admission," Tinker flashed back at him, "although I will unbend far enough to state that this thing can be settled out of court. Send Jefferson Keeler around to see me. I'll do business with him."

James T. Quigley left immediately, saying he would consult with Mr. Keeler. Evidently he kept his word, for half an hour later Keeler's secretary rang up to make an appointment. To Tinker's suggestion that he would be pleased to receive Mr. Keeler at any time convenient to the latter, the secretary replied that the president of the P. Q. & R. would be over immediately.

Jefferson Peabody Keeler was a thin little man with a rat-bristle mustache and an eye like that of a dead cod. He had been raised on the principle that time is money and that procrastination is the thief that steals it; hence he dispensed with introductions and polite preliminaries and coldly requested Mr. Tinker to state his proposition. He added that he expected to be held up, but warned Tinker that he had his limit and to stay within it; otherwise he'd fight. While his chief counsel had informed him it would be a long, bitter fight and would delay the building of their road some years until the Supreme Court could finally dispose of the appeal, still, in the end the P. Q. & R. would win. He asked Mr. Tinker if he realized that.

"My friend," the fix-it specialist replied, "I have forgotten more law than your chief counsel, whoever he is, will ever know. Of course, I realize it. I'm wielding a club which can be taken away from me—in time."

"Time is money, money talks," snapped Keeler. "Out with it."

"I don't want any money, Mr. Keeler."

"Then, in the fiend's name, what do you want?"

"I want Mrs. Keeler to give a luncheon to my wife at the Escholtzia Club. She is not to invite Mrs. Atherton James. Then, when Mrs. Tinker's application for membership is posted, I want it to go through promptly and without a hitch. The last time Mrs. T. was up for election to membership, your wife and Mrs. Atherton James blackballed her. If it happens again, Mr. Keeler—oh, but it couldn't possibly happen. Mrs. Keeler is now president of the Club and the social arbiter of this city."

"Upon my word," snapped old Jeff Keeler, "you're a most remarkable man."

"You manage a railroad fairly well," Tinker suggested. "I assume you experience no difficulty in managing your wife."

Old Jeff Keeler's cough was eloquent. Managing a railroad was one thing, but managing Mrs. Keeler was something else. Tinker thought he saw the old man shiver slightly, as if it required all of his courage to make his next remark.

"I'LL GO TO IT, Tinker. A man out on the end of a limb would be a fool to saw off the limb. Just the same, I'd rather give you fifty thousand dollars for your infernal cemetery association than approach Mrs. K. with your outrageous alternative. Sure you wouldn't prefer the cash and let the credit go?"

Tinker shook his head. "No," he answered. "I do pretty well at my profession, and Mrs. Tinker and I have all the money we need. Our tastes are simple. More money wouldn't make us any happier—and Mrs. T.'s resolved to belong to the Escholtzia Club. After Mrs. Keeler has entertained her at luncheon at the Club and introduced her, you can have a right of way through the property of the Willow Pass Cemetery Association, Mr. Keeler. I realize you're anxious to commence operations on your extension, and it will be nearly three months before Mrs. Tinker's name can be proposed for membership. I'll take a chance and give you a deed to a right of way the day after the luncheon. After her public acceptance of my wife, Mrs. Keeler's associates on the board of directors will hardly dare use the blackball again!"

"You're a damn' scoundrel," Jefferson P. Keeler

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announced with conviction, "but I accept your terms. Good day, sir."

"One thing more, Mr. Keeler. That cemetery association stands me in round figures two thousand dollars."

"Cheap enough!" old Jeff growled. "I'll send you a check."

The door had scarcely closed behind the president of the P. Q. & R. before Tinker's 'phone rang. It was Cocky O'Rourke, who drove the ambulance out at the City and County Hospital.

"I got another for you, Tib," he exulted, "—an old wren named Maggie the Rag. She took an overdose of hop——"

"Keep her, Cocky," replied Tinker kindly, "I'm out of business."

* * *

LET US ASSUME three months to have passed. Then let us assume Mr. Tiberius Tinker in the identical position in which we first discovered him—to wit, alone in his office, drawing cats in red ink. Again the door of his private office opens to admit Pearly; again he rises to greet her; again she casts herself upon his manly breast and sobs out the story of the treachery of that odious Mrs. Jefferson Peabody Keeler.

Alas! Pearly has been black-balled again; this time, however, Mrs. Keeler is in the clear, although there is not the slightest doubt in Tinker's mind that she cast the fatal black-ball. For, having publicly acknowledged Pearly, albeit against her will (she was too tactful not to have swallowed the bitter draught with the utmost grace), she could rest secure in the knowledge that suspicion could not possibly rest upon her; for, praise be, the ballot was secret!

It was a monstrous situation. Tinker could have wept with the rage and chagrin that consumed him in the knowledge that he had exposed to this supreme insult the one human being on earth he loved and revered. He had been tricked—and by a woman! Old Jeff Keeler had received a deed to a right of way from the Willow Pass Cemetery Association the day following Pearly's brief triumph at the Escholtzia Club luncheon, and secure in this knowledge, Keeler's wife had proceeded to present to Tiberius Tinker, fix-it specialist, something which no human being had hitherto succeeded in presenting to him—that commodity colloquially designated as the double-cross!

The trouble with Tinker lay in the fact that his activities had heretofore been confined to fixing things with men for other men. His experience with women had been limited to one woman—his wife. Good, clever, tender-hearted, handsome Pearly! Tinker loved her so he couldn't see that, despite her many excellent points, Pearly as a *grande dame* was not to the manner born. Few men would have noticed the little heritages of Pearly's showgirl and stenographer past, but all well-bred women could! For Pearly was afflicted with a dread disease known as "social climbing," and clever though she was, she could not, in the presence of the *bon ton* of the Escholtzia Club, altogether conceal the fact that she realized the strangeness of her surroundings. However, as we have already stated, of this Tinker knew nothing. For that matter, neither did Pearly; she only wept copiously, and the enraged Tinker swore vigorously in secret.

When Tib could quiet poor Pearly, he called a taxi and sent her home. Then he went back to his office, leaned his elbows on his desk and with his head in his hands gave himself up to meditation.

"Wow!" he sighed, "what a walloping the Tinkers have been handed! And what a sublimated jackass I've been through the whole transaction—doing business with old Jeff! I should have done business with Mrs. Jeff; then this thing wouldn't have happened."

He pondered further. "Well, it's never too late to mend," he soliloquized presently. "We're licked something scandalous this time, Pearly, but you wait! Something will turn up to enable me to get my hands on old Jeff Keeler's windpipe again, and when I do, I'll tear it out by the roots. You miserable old tabby! I'll frame a scandal for your rat of a husband, my lady, and the only way out for you will be through my office door. By the gods, you'll pay through the nose for this, Mrs. Keeler!"

Six months have passed. Again the curtain rises, discovering Tiberius Tinker alone in his office, with nothing to do save draw cats in red ink. The door leading to his general office opens, and Miss Kerwin, his stenographer, enters with a card, which she lays upon the fix-it specialist's desk. Mr. Tinker glances at it and reads:

MR. THOMAS BRIGGS.

Now we go on with the story.

"Why, it's old Reddy Briggs," Tinker mused. "Haven't seen him since we were at law school together."

He stepped to the door, opened it and cried: "Oh, you Reddy Briggs! Come in, you crimson rascal, and give an account of yourself."

In obedience to Tinker's hearty greeting, Mr. Thomas Loren Briggs entered. He was a large, red, raw-boned man in the middle thirties. He had tremendous hands and tremendous white teeth, which he showed in a boyish grin, and the tremendous freckles on his amiable countenance resembled nothing in this world so much as twenty-five cents' worth of gingersnaps.

"Old Reynard Tinker," he bellowed, proffering his huge right paw, which Mr. Tinker was foolish enough to accept. While he sat nursing his crushed digits, his visitor sat down and continued to grin like the head of an old fiddle.

"So you're the fix-it specialist," he boomed presently. "I might have known it was you. Water will seek its level, you know, Tib; I'll bet you're still as crooked as a bedspring and as slick as a greased pig."

"Same, blunt, honest old Reddy Briggs," Tinker declared. "By Jove, I'm glad to see you. Yes, I'm the fix-it specialist, and I think I improve with age. At least, Reddy, nothing has developed since I saw you fifteen years ago to cause me to suspect I am losing my punch."

"I'm glad of that," Reddy Briggs replied, "because I have a case for you."

"It can wait, Reddy. Tell me all about yourself—what you've been doing, how much money you've made, whether you're married or single—everything. Have a cigar." He passed a box to his visitor.

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For an hour they reveled in those reminiscences of college days so dear to old grads meeting after the passage of a decade or more. Finally, having threshed out the past, they arrived at the present, and Reddy Briggs remembered that he had a fish to fry.

"Tib," he declared, "I want to use you professionally, but before we get down to brass tacks, you might as well know that I cannot afford your usual rates. I must have cut rates; otherwise the expense will run the cost of my campaign for district attorney of Madrone County up to a figure that will cause me to commit two crimes. First, I would sin against the purity of the election laws by spending more money than the law permits me to spend in my campaign; and second, should I win the office, I would lose it again unless I perjured myself when submitting my sworn statement of campaign expenses. I do not care to be tempted."

"You were always troubled with a conscience, Reddy. However, dump your load of grief. Of course, you'll get bed-rock rates, if only for old sake's sake. What do you want me to do? Give you sound political advice? If so, I warn you, Reddy, I shall not have the audacity to charge for that. Why, if I ran for dog-catcher on a Fusion ticket of the three big parties, the Prohibition candidate would beat me three to one."

"I do not require any political advice, Tib. What I want you to do is to frame something—strictly within the law, mind you—that will put the other side in bad and make me solid with the masses. I was in despair until I happened to recall some of the stunts you used to put over in our college days; so I came to town, looked you up in the directory—and here I am."

"Well, now," Tinker admitted, "you're in right. I accept the nomination, Reddy, and if you'll tell me who the other fellow is, and how he works, and give me some kind of a line on him, I'll guarantee to put the skids under him if it's humanly possible."

"That's trading talk, Tib. Thank you, old man. Now, if you'll pay careful attention, I'll endeavour to explain. In the first place, in the matter of political faith, I am——"

"Progressive, of course."

"And my competitor for the office is——"

"A reactionary from one or both of the old parties, and in all probability a crook."

"EXACTLY—only he hasn't been found out. I'm the incumbent. I've made good, and I deserve reelection. I could have had the office, too, without a struggle if it hadn't been for old Jeff Keeler. He's the president of the P. Q. & R.——"

"Hold! Enough!" Tinker cried. "I accept the case for nothing. He's building a branch road through Madrone County, and thinks he ought to own the legal machinery thereof, eh? I understand. I have a crow to pluck with old Jeff Keeler, and the minute he horns into your game it becomes a personal matter with me. Reddy, I shall not even ask you to foot the incidental expense to which I may be put, because if there's half a chance, I'll make old Jeff foot it himself. I've done it before, and I'll do it again. I see the situation without a diagram. He's a pirate, and you're too honest."

"His political bureau has corrupted a working majority of the Madrone County board of supervisors, and they've granted him a franchise to run his trains through the heart of the county seat," Reddy explained. "I know there's been money used, and I've started a graft investigation, but my term of office expires next January, and they have to beat me at the coming election in order to kill off the investigation. They're running against me a weak brother with a gift of gab and considerable personal charm, and they've sent the sack into the campaign. I know the railroad is backing my opponent. My common sense tells me that much, but I can't prove it. I'm shy of cash to make my campaign, and to be candid about it, Tib, I think I'm licked."

"REDDY," Tinker declared, "remember this: you're never licked until you're counted out. Who is the local custodian of the P. Q. & R. slush fund in Madrone County?"

"One Jim Logan. He owns a second-class saloon in Fair Oaks. For years he has been the local Republican boss, and since the P. Q. & R. has entered Madrone County, he has been their Man Friday."

"Very well," Tinker answered, and made a note of the name. "We'll just land Jim Logan out in the grass and make him tell where he gets the money. However, that's a minor detail. Is this the P. Q. & R.'s first entry into Madrone County politics?"

"No, it's the second. They worked a recall against Judge Meldon of the Superior Court this summer. They didn't beat the old warrior, but they made him extend himself to the last notch."

"Fine, Reddy. Send me a tabulated statement of the vote, by precincts, in that recall election. It will indicate to me which sections the railroad party is strongest in. These are the points on which we must center our attack in your campaign."

"All right. Now, what else do you want to know?"

"Nothing. I'll discover the rest for myself, Reddy. There's bound to be a weak spot somewhere. There always is—and I'm the boy to discover it. Go back to Madrone County and make your fight, and the moment I have something hopeful to report, I'll write you."

In answer to a telegram asking him to come down to the city to discuss a matter of mutual interest, Reddy Briggs presented himself at Tiberius Tinker's office two weeks before the November election.

"Well, Tib," he boomed the moment he was announced, "how about you?"

"Reddy," Mr. Tinker declared solemnly, "win, lose, or draw, old Jeff Keeler's name is in the lion's mouth. How goes your fight?"

"It's anybody's battle, Tib. I'm getting a swift run for my money, and I wouldn't bet a canceled postage stamp on the result."

"You are satisfied, then, that if you lose it will be by a small margin, Reddy?"

"Not more than five hundred votes, at the very most, I should say, Tib."

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Tinker nodded. "All of which fits in very nicely with my plans, Reddy." He smiled—a thoughtful little smile. "I've spent a week in Madrone County," he continued, "and I think I have the big leak plugged. The man that was scheduled to trip you up is one Addison K. Haines, a millionaire lumberman with a plant at Hainesville. He employs a thousand men in his mill and woods camps, and I note by the tabulated returns in the Meldon recall election that he voted his employés practically solid against the Judge. Of course, if he could do that once he could do it again; and if he is permitted to do it, you'll be retired to private practice on the first Monday in next January, Reddy."

"That's so," Reddy assented gloomily. "Addison K. Haines has refused me permission to visit the camps and mills for the purpose of addressing his men on the issues of the campaign."

"Well, don't worry about him, Reddy. You hold in your own hands the weapon with which to club Brother Haines into line."

REDDY'S EYES opened in amazement. Tinker grinned maliciously.

"Do you know Dionysius Pratt, the justice of the peace in Hainesville?"

Reddy nodded.

"Well, I want a place in your office for Di Pratt, in case you're elected."

Reddy Briggs threw up both hands in horror. "Spare me, Tib," he pleaded. "I couldn't have that fellow Pratt around me. He's an ass, a gross incompetent. Tib, he has just sufficient ability to be justice of the peace in Hainesville. If I made him Assistant District Attorney of Madrone County at two hundred and fifty dollars a month, he wouldn't be worth half of it; my friends would declare I had gone crazy, and, moreover, if I hadn't I soon would be, with Di Pratt balling things up in my office."

"Reddy," Mr. Tinker pleaded wearily, "what business is it of yours if Di Pratt isn't worth his salary? You don't have to pay it, so why worry? Will you never learn to put that conscience of yours behind you? You ought to know I wouldn't saddle Di Pratt onto my worst enemy unless such a course was absolutely necessary. I realize he's a misfit, but he knows that himself and that he'd die of fright if he ever had to try a real case before a real judge, with a real lawyer opposing him. Believe me, Di Pratt has sense enough not to want to make a spectacle of himself. Make him assistant bond-and-warrant clerk, Reddy; that will keep him busy and out of your sight, and at the same time provide Di with a decent salary to support his numerous family."

"But why must I have him?"

"He's the weapon you must provide yourself with if you are to win this election. After you have provided the weapon, lend it to me and I'll do the dirty work. Reddy, take my word for it, Di Pratt will elect you."

"Di Pratt is the prince of boobs. He couldn't elect anybody. He doesn't control even his own vote. I tell you, he'll do what Haines tells him to do; if he doesn't, it makes no material difference to Haines, because Di Pratt can't do anything, anyhow!"

"He is to be your next assistant bond-and-warrant clerk," Tinker declared firmly.

"But I have a good man in that job already. He's working tooth and toenail for me now, and naturally he expects his reward——"

"He's had four years at the pork barrel, and it's time he gave way to a better man. Why, Reddy, the salary that goes with that job will be a godsend to the Pratts. They must have a million kids——"

"I can't make a pre-election promise, Tib. It's against the law."

"Then you're licked, Reddy. You've got to play ball with me, or I can't elect you."

"But what do you expect Di Pratt to do for me in return for that job?"

"Haven't I just told you he'll elect you? Never mind how he'll do it. He doesn't even know himself yet, because I haven't told him, and I'm not going to tell you. You're too confounded honest and ethical, and might kick over the traces. I can only assure you of one thing, Reddy, and that is, I'm going to play strictly within the law. You have my word of honour on that. I've been a rascal in my day, Reddy, but the good Lord forbid that I should ever jeopardize the liberty and happiness of that hapless idiot, Di Pratt, just to elect you and gratify a personal spite against Jeff Keeler. The fact of the matter is, Reddy," he confessed, "I have already promised Pratt the job, and have advanced him five hundred dollars on account of his first six months' salary. He needed some ready money, and I gave it to him. Surely, Reddy, you're not going to throw me down so I can't protect that loan, are you?"

Briggs surrendered. "Be careful of poor Pratt," he warned Tinker. "No rascality, now, Tib."

For answer Tinker stepped to the door of his private office and called in Dionysius Pratt from the general office.

"I have told Mr. Briggs of my promise to you, Pratt," he announced, "and he is here now to confirm that promise."

Dionysius Pratt looked sheepishly toward the district attorney, who grew red and embarrassed. "Whatever promises Mr. Tinker made you on my behalf, Pratt," he declared, "have my sanction, and if elected I shall unhesitatingly fulfill them."

Pratt thanked him and shuffled out. He was a shoddy, nervous, abject little man, his raiment suggesting in some particulars that of a ranch-hand and in others that of a rural sport.

"Looks like something the cat might bring in," Reddy Briggs growled disgustedly, as Pratt retired.

"His poor little thirteen-and-a-half neck with the number sixteen celluloid collar reminds me of a tombstone with a fence around it. But don't you worry, Reddy. That little Pratt person will perform like a raging lion when I order him into action."

"He hasn't the nerve of a kitten, Tib. Don't be deceived," Reddy warned.

"I am not deceived," Tinker flashed back. "I practised too long in the police-courts of the metropolis not to be a shrewd judge of human nature and animal courage. If Di Pratt happened to be a single man,

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he'd be worthless for my purpose. He'd be afraid to take the short end of a large bet that he's alive. However, since he is a married man, all his courage is in his wife's name—and Mrs. Pratt and I understand each other. By the by, Reddy, there's an Amazon for you."

"Is she your friend?"

"Is she? Didn't I loan Di Pratt five hundred dollars the family needed worse than salvation, and haven't I promised Mrs. Pratt I'd land a two-hundred-and-fifty-dollar job in the district attorney's office for Di? A good many men will not fight for their offspring, but I never saw a woman who wouldn't."

"Then if Di gets out of hand——" Briggs queried.

"His wife will make hell look like a summer holiday for him. He may fear the power of Addison K. Haines, but he dreads his wife's tongue!"

Mr. Tinker laughed. "Once I had occasion to do business with a married man, Reddy," he explained, "and I failed to take his wife into consideration. Result—ruin! Nobody ever had to sting me twice to cure me of being a sucker."

On a morning in late October, Mr. Tiberius Tinker alighted from the P. Q. & R. train at Hainesville and made his way up Main Street to the Palm Pool Parlour. A rough, burly-looking lumberjack, one Joe Rafferty, was shooting pool, but upon observing Mr. Tinker, he set his cue back in the rack and followed the fix-it specialist into a back room.

"Well, Joseph, old dear," Tinker began, "how about you?"

"I'm here to earn that hundred you telephoned you had for me," Rafferty rumbled. "What's the game?"

"I believe Tom Evans, the manager of the Haines Lumber Company's interests, fired you last week."

Joe Rafferty nodded gloomily.

"What are you going to do about it?" Tinker continued.

"I don't know. I'd like to punch his head, but if I do, he'll have me arrested an' fined—an' I ain't in no position to give up twenty-five dollars for the fun o' punchin' Tom Evans."

"Ah," Tinker murmured. "Now we come to the business in hand. Here are one hundred dollars for punching Tom Evans, and here are twenty-five more to pay your fine, in the event one is levied against you. Are you interested?"

"Just to show you how interested I am," Joe Rafferty replied, "I'll punch Evans and call for the money afterward."

"And if you don't get it, I suppose you'll punch me, eh?" Tinker laughed, and the big lumberjack nodded.

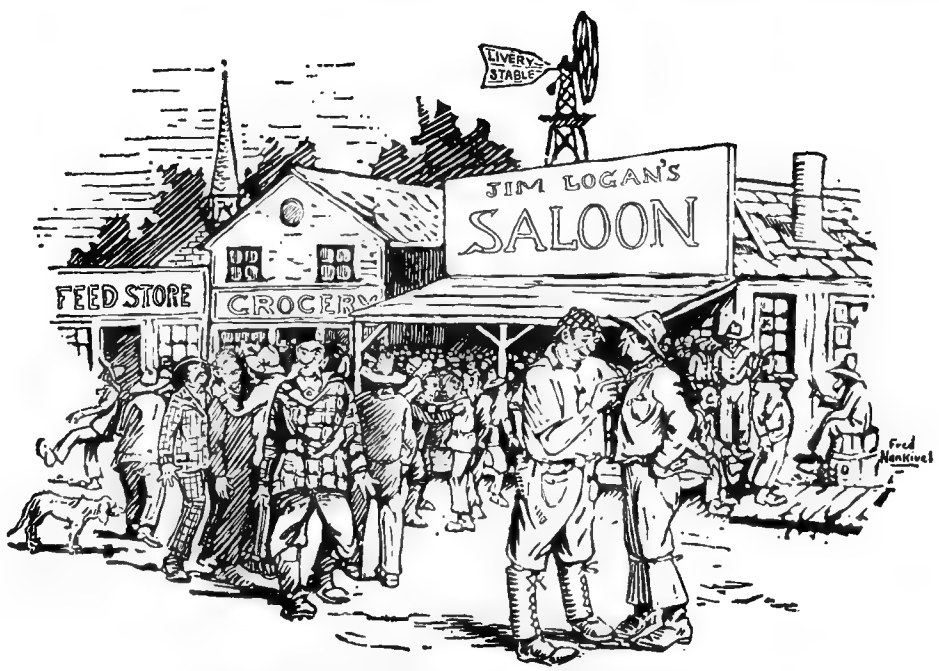
"Take the money now, Joe," Tinker suggested, and passed it over. "At exactly twelve o'clock today, when the whistle blows at the Haines mill and the hundreds of employes come pouring out of the mill and box factory on their way to lunch at the mill kitchen, you are to enter Evans' office, drag him out, slap him two or three times—not too hard—and run for your life. You will not have to run far. Jud Wright, the village constable, will be within hailing distance to arrest you and protect you from the mob."

"Consider it done," Joe Rafferty promised. And at five minutes after twelve that very day it was! At twenty minutes after twelve Joe Rafferty, escorted by Jud Wright, who had been requested by Tiberius Tinker to escort him (Tinker) up to Tom Evans's office for an introduction, found himself lodged in the Hainesville bastile on a charge of assault and battery; at twelve-thirty Tiberius Tinker had interviewed the prisoner and engaged to defend him; and at one o'clock, when Justice of the Peace Dionysius Pratt came down to his office after luncheon, Mr. Tinker bailed Joe Rafferty out of jail and Justice Pratt set the culprit's case for trial the following Saturday morning at ten o'clock.

It was the habit of Addison K. Haines to come down to his office about ten o'clock. As he approached his great mills the morning following Jud Wright's official visit, he was vaguely aware of a missing note in the scheme of things. Preoccupied in other matters, he had reached the office door before it was borne in upon his consciousness that neither his sawmill, his box factory, nor his sash-and-blind factory was being operated. The note he had missed was the insistent whine of the saws.

"What's wrong with the plant this morning, Burke?" he queried of his bookkeeper, who stood regarding him from the office steps.

"Joe Rafferty came up here at noon the other day and started in to thrash Mr. Evans. Jud Wright



The overflow meeting adjourned to the saloon.

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came along about that time and arrested Joe, and he's being tried this morning for assault and battery in Di Pratt's court. He's got a fellow up from the city to defend him, they tell me, and this outside lawyer's had so many of the men subpœnaed as witnesses that it crippled the crew and we had to shut down to avoid accidents. There's two hundred and eighteen of the boys hanging around downtown waiting to be called to testify. They were subpœnaed to appear in court by ten o'clock, and of course they had to go or be fined for contempt of court."

Addison K. Haines admitted that he was perfectly willing to have several things happen to him if that wasn't the craziest proposition he had ever heard of. He was about to start downtown to see what could be done about it, when it occurred to him that nothing could be done, and his practical mind sought instantly to take advantage of what many men might have considered an outrage.

"Well, today is Saturday," he said finally, "and they'll finish with the case today, so we can go to work again on Monday. That gives us two days to make some repairs in the plant. I was going to put in a new bandsaw on the pony side soon, and that meant a shutdown for a half a day, anyhow. I'll go over to the mill, gather the rest of the boys together and get busy. We'll not be out very much lost time, after all; but for all that, I'll give that idiot Pratt a piece of my mind for issuing those subpœnas."

If Addison K. Haines could only have been present in the immediate vicinity of Justice Pratt's courtroom at that moment, however, he would not have dismissed the matter so lightly. Ordinarily Hainesville's temple of justice would accommodate about thirty people. The first thirty witnesses to arrive, therefore, consumed with a mild, bucolic curiosity, promptly preempted all of the available seats and waited for the trial to commence. As witness after witness appeared, however, and the crowd commenced to augment, what more natural than that an overflow meeting should result? Also, what was more natural than that this overflow should presently grow weary of standing first on one foot and then on the other, and seek asylum in the saloon across the street, from which vantage-point they could hear Constable Jud Wright calling them to come into court when their turn to testify should arrive?

Justice Pratt looking singularly forlorn and nervous, rapped for order promptly at ten o'clock, read the charge, arraigned the prisoner and informed him that under the the law he was entitled to a jury trial and to be represented by counsel. Had Mr. Rafferty provided himself with counsel?

Mr. Tiberius Tinker rose, bowed to Justice Pratt and said in sonorous tones:

"Your Honour, I represent the prisoner at the bar." Then he sat down.

"Rafferty, do you plead guilty or not guilty to the charge here made against you?" Justice Pratt next inquired.

Rafferty mumbled "Not guilty," and Tinker rose again in his place and on behalf of his client demanded that right which the Constitution guarantees to every person charged with a crime or misdemeanour—the right of trial by jury.

"Very well, Mr. Tinker," Di Pratt squeaked nervously, and cast an appealing glance at Mrs. Pratt, who occupied a front seat at the trial. He turned to Constable Jud Wright.

"Constable," he ordered, "you will go forth through the town and summon the first twenty-five men you meet and who are eligible for jury duty, and instruct them to be present in court at one-thirty P. M. In the meantime, gentlemen, the court will declare a recess until that hour."

At half-past one, when court again convened, Jud Wright appeared, to announce to Justice Di Pratt his utter inability to procure a venire for the jury-box!

"Impossible!" Tiberius Tinker declared, springing to his feet. "This is a nefarious scheme to rob my client of his constitutional right to trial by jury."

" 'Tain't," yelled Constable Jud Wright. "Every man in town that's eligible for jury dooty's been subpœnaed for a character witness for the defendant! I've tried fifty of 'em already, an' every one of 'em shows a subpœna as a witness. 'Tain't possible for a man to be a witness an' a juryman at the same time, is it?"

"I fear you have not searched very diligently, Mr. Wright," Justice Pratt managed to articulate, with another appealing glance at Mrs. Pratt. "However, in order to give you further time, with the consent of counsel for the defendant I will adjourn court until ten o'clock on Monday."

Counsel for Rafferty having no objection, it was so ordered; whereupon Jud Wright went outside and constituted himself a sort of town-crier, announcing to everybody within a radius of two blocks that the case had been postponed until ten o'clock on Monday and for all witnessess to report in court again at that hour.

"Di, old pal," said Tiberius Tinker when they had found themselves alone in the courtroom, "this thing is going to work like a charm. However, we mustn't overlook one thing. Addison K. Haines owns this town body and bones; he can stop your credit with your grocer and your butcher; he can institute a recall election and kick you out of your job—and when he hears that this case has gone over until Monday, which means another day of idleness for his infant industries, he'll be on your trail for an explanation. Consequently you must avoid him. To that end, I have chartered an automobile; and you and I had better start forthwith on a little trout fishing expedition. Trout season closes on November first, and we have this afternoon and all day tomorrow to catch our last mess. I hear there is excellent fishing on the Navarro River, about fifty miles from here. We'll get back on Monday morning just in time to convene court."

"Mr. Tinker," Di Pratt quavered, "this is horrible."

"It's sensible," Mrs. Pratt admonished. "It will get us somewhere; and if you want to stick in this town in poverty, you'll stick alone, Di Pratt."

"You have done nothing amiss," Mr. Tinker reminded him sternly. "You are acting strictly within your legal rights as a judge. Nobody can question your attitude in this matter, Di. A judge may not

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refuse to issue a subpœna for any witness demanded by either the defense or the prosecution, and it is not within his province first to make inquiry in order to ascertain whether the witness it is desired to subpœna is or is not the possessor of testimony material to the case at issue. Such action on your part would result inevitably in a reversal of the verdict should the case be carried to a higher court. Also, it is not possible for you to deny a prisoner the right of trial by jury, and you cannot help it if Jud Wright cannot round up a jury. How did you know I was going to summon every prospective juryman as a character witness for Joe? You had no alternative but to grant an adjournment until Monday."

"Golly," Di Pratt chattered, "I hope your plans work out, Mr. Tinker."

"They usually do," Tinker answered dryly, "—especially when I make them myself."

Addison K. Haines went downtown after dinner that Saturday night. He had blood in his eye, and he was searching for Di Pratt, but for obvious reasons he did not find him. However, he did discover that half of his crew had been launched on a wild jamboree, and if Addison K. Haines knew anything of mill-hands and lumberjacks,—and he thought he did,—that jamboree would continue until Monday. However, there was nothing to do but grin and bear it. He realized that Monday would be wasted, but still he could turn this misfortune to a partial advantage by overhauling his belting and pulleys, blowing down his boilers and installing a new planer in the box factory. And on Monday afternoon he would send out a provost-guard of his most reliable men to round up the delinquents and try to whip them into shape for work on Tuesday morning.

On Monday morning, when court convened, Constable Jud Wright again proclaimed his inability to procure a jury within the limits of Judge Pratt's jurisdiction, and Tiberius Tinker, gallantly declining to take advantage of the situation, withdrew his demand for a jury trial and left the matter of a verdict in the hands of Justice Pratt. Immediately the trial proceeded, and Tinker called for his first witness, one Tige Hennessy.

In vain did Constable Wright cry aloud: "Tige Hennessy, come into court!" Mr. Hennessy had no such intention, for he was engaged at the moment in a fierce hand-to-hand conflict with a fellow countryman on the floor of a neighbouring saloon. It was fully fifteen minutes before Mr. Tinker despaired of procuring Tige and called for his next witness, who, by a strange coincidence, was also absent from the courtroom. The constable went outside seeking him and returned presently to announce that the witness was too drunk to appear before the court.

"Then arrest him for contempt of court," thundered Judge Pratt, "and place him in jail until he sobers up."

When court adjourned for luncheon, Mr. Tinker had not succeeded in placing a single witness on the stand, and Constable Wright's little cement jail was crowded to suffocation. By five o'clock Mr. Tinker had disposed of twenty-two witnesses, all of whom professed not the slightest knowledge of the alleged assault, despite Mr. Tinker's adroit questioning, and were allowed to go. When they reported for work on Tuesday morning, however, their presence brought no joy to Addison K. Haines, for not a single man of the twenty-two occupied a position of any importance in the sawmill, and another day of enforced idleness had to be faced!

The third day of the trial of the People vs. Joseph Rafferty had been in progress about ten minutes when Addison K. Haines drove his car up in front of Justice Pratt's law-mill, leaped angrily out and crushed his way into the courtroom. His men gave way before him, as with flashing eye and threatening mien he advanced to the little railing behind which Mr. Tinker, Joe Rafferty, Jud Wright and Justice Pratt and Mrs. Pratt were seated. Tinker saw him coming, and on pretense of consulting on some point of law with His Honour, he whispered:

"Here comes Haines, and believe me, there's blood on the moon. He's been losing a couple of thousand dollars a day every day his plant has been shut down because of this trial, and it's turned his head. Stand pat, Di. For the love of Mike, don't weaken. Remember all I told you, and hand it to him hard—if he deserves it!"

Haines reached the railing just as Tiberius Tinker resumed his cross-examination of a witness who was protesting volubly that he "didn't know nothin' about nothin'." The lumber baron paid not the slightest attention to the affairs of the court, but fixing a stern glance on Di Pratt, he rasped out:

"Pratt, I want to know what the devil you mean by your actions. Have you lost what little brains the Lord endowed you with at birth——"

"Your Honour," roared Tiberius Tinker, "I demand to know who this person is and by what right he dares to enter this court, interrupt the proceedings thereof and insult Your Honour on the bench?" And he glared frightfully at Addison K. Haines. "How dare you, sir?" he shouted, and shook a long, admonitory finger under Haines' nose.

"Mr. Haines," Justice Pratt began in trembling tones, "—er—er—really, you mustn't address the Court in this — er — angry and — er — peremptory manner."

"Is that so?" sneered Haines. "Well, I'll have you to understand, Di Pratt, that I don't purpose being robbed and pillaged, in the sacred name of the law, by any chuckle-headed idiot of a justice of the peace that ever conspired with a blackmailer to——"

"Your Honour!" cried Tiberius Tinker, at the top of his voice. "Your Honour! Why, this is the most colossal contempt I have ever heard of. I demand protection from the insults of this rowdy fellow."

"You infernal pinhead, Pratt," continued Haines. "I'll get you for this. You'll be justice of the peace in Hainesville about two months longer, and then you'll be retired. You infernal idiot, do you suppose my mills are to remain shut down indefinitely while you and this crook" (here he pointed to Tinker) "juggle with justice on a cooked-up case? Have you paused to reflect that your fun means my ruin—that for each and every day my mills do not run, the net

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"You infernal pinhead," continued Haines, "I'll get you for this."

loss to me amounts to nearly two thousand dollars?" He pounded the railing before him. "I demand to be informed just when this crazy case will be disposed of finally!"

Di Pratt gasped and swallowed his Adam's-apple half a dozen times. He glanced appealingly at his wife, who glared at him savagely; then with the crest-fallen air of a sheep-killing dog, he rapped at his desk and piped shrilly:

"Mr. Haines, I find it impossible to overlook your insults to this court. You are adjudged in contempt of court, and it is the judgment of the Court that you be confined in the city jail for a period of thirty days without the alternative of a fine. Constable Wright, you will please—er—er—arrest Mr. Haines forthwith, and—and—con—con—confine him."

Addison K. Haines's jaw dropped foolishly. He stared at Dionysius Pratt as little boys stare who think they see things at night, and not until Constable Jud Wright placed his hand on his arm did the lumberman seem to comprehend what had occurred. Then, realizing that for some ungodly reason this weak, brainless, characterless Justice Pratt had suddenly declined to be bluffed and intimidated and that he, Haines, had placed himself in the most glaring contempt of court, he sought to hedge.

"Your Honour," he began foolishly, "I—I—er——"

"Order in the court!" yelled Tiberius Tinker.

"I regret, Judge, that my temper——"

"Take him away, Constable, take him away," piped Justice Pratt. "I declare, in all my years on the bench I have never heard a human being use such contemptuous language to a sworn upholder of the law."

"But, Your Honour, if you will permit me to explain, perhaps an apology——"

"Coward!" said Mr. Tinker in fury. "How dare you allude to me as a crook?"

Di Pratt, encouraged by a loving look from his wife, boldly took the fragments of his courage in hand.

"My self-respect will not permit the acceptance of an apology inspired by fear of jail and not by a sincere regret for an intemperate act," he declared sternly. Haines's sudden humility had inspired him with a realization of the dignity of his office as justice of the peace of Hainesville. "Mr. Constable," he continued, "remove the prisoner forthwith, and let us go on with this trial. Mr. Tinker, continue your examination of the witness."

Night had spread its protecting mantle over Hainesville. In the "front room" of Dionysius Pratt's humble home, Mrs. Addison K. Haines pleaded in vain with Mrs. Pratt for the release from jail of the financial backbone of Hainesville. In an upstairs bedroom, the human rabbit, Di Pratt, cowered in hiding and listened to the stentorian tones of his double-fisted better half as she sternly rebuffed the tearful advances of Mrs. Addison K. Haines, while in the rear of the jail Mr. Tiberius Tinker placed his Machiavellian countenance against a grated window and called softly:

"Mr. Haines!"

Addison K. Haines's face appeared at the window.

"Howdy?" Mr. Tinker greeted him cheerfully. He sniffed and said "Phew!"—a truly delicate tribute to an atmosphere that Huck Fin would have described as "various." "Well, old settler, how are you making it?"

"Who are you?" the hapless Haines demanded.

"Tinker, counsel for Joe Rafferty," the fix-it specialist whispered.

Addison K. Haines begged to differ with him. He said Mr. Tinker was something else, no matter what. But he said it. Tinker paid no attention to him.

"I'm here to see if I cannot pound some sense into your thick head, Mr. Haines," he said calmly and in a low voice. "How do you like the going?" Haines did not reply, and Tinker went on: "You're stuck here for thirty days, and there isn't a power on earth can save you except Di Pratt—and he won't do that

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unless I ask him to. And I can, with the connivance of Pratt, keep this fool case dangling a month longer, and all the time your great plant will be closed down and your business will be going to the devil because you will not be there to care for it! Rather a blue outlook, don't you think?"

"There's a reason for this," Haines answered in a choking voice. Tinker really suspected he had been crying. "What are your terms?"

"Ah," Tinker breathed. "I thought you'd see the light, and, like a sensible business man, do the decent thing. If Di Pratt lets you out of jail tonight, and continues this lunatic trial until the day after election, do you think you can guarantee a landslide in Hainesville for my good friend Thomas L. Briggs, the Progressive candidate for district attorney of Madrone County?"

"Tinker, I dare not," Haines protested earnestly. "The P. Q. & R. would step on my tail if I did. Oh, curse these petty political scraps," he half screamed. "They have me between the devil and the deep sea. It's a case with me of heads they win—tails I lose."

"What will old Jeff Keeler do to you if you don't support his ticket?"

"He'll declare a car shortage. I ship over his line—and if I can't get my orders out, the customers will cancel, and it will cost me a fortune and the loss of a lot of the business I've succeeded in building up."

"You're a lobster, Haines," Tinker declared. "You've only taken program from the P. Q. & R. because it was the easiest thing to do—easier than telling them to chase themselves while you went before the State railroad commission and lodged a complaint against the P. Q. & R. You have a swift and certain remedy there. This old game of a common carrier's discriminating against a shipper is a thing of the past, and you know it. They need your business just as badly as you need cars, and they must prove a general scarcity of cars, in which case you will get your just share of them. Remember, Haines, no corporation in the business of making money ever throws money away just to catch even on an individual.

"Now, listen to me. You go quietly to the general freight agent of the P. Q. & R., tell him you're going to require a certain number of cars to get out some huge orders you're figuring on for next year's delivery, and induce him to write you a letter guaranteeing you that number of cars. Tell him you must have a guarantee in order to play safe when figuring on this contract. Then, when you get it, you can win a suit for huge damages against the railroad if subsequently it begins to squeeze you. In the meantime, you'll be permitted to return to the bosom of your family and attend to your affairs. If the three Hainesville precincts return as large a plurality for Tom Briggs for district attorney as they did for the man that ran against Judge Meldon at the recall election last summer, Di Pratt will receive your apology and suspend your sentence, the Joe Rafferty affair will be settled by a fine levied against Joe—a nominal sum of say, five dollars, which I shall pay—and we'll all be happy. But none of these desired conditions will come to pass unless you perform; and in the meantime the entire matter lies in *statu quo* until the day after election."

There was a long silence, broken presently by the fix-it specialist.

"Have I got you by the short hair—or haven't I? Speak up, Mr. Haines."

"I accept," Haines murmured.

"Then go your way and sin no more," Tinker retorted lightly, and disappeared in the gloom.

Half an hour later Constable Jud Wright's little jail contained nothing more tangible than two cockroaches and a bad smell, while three days later, Addison K. Haines, having seen his duty, in the language of the classic "went an' done it." Reddy Briggs was retained in office by a plurality of two hundred-odd votes, and the sudden reversal of form in Hainesville caused the political bureau of the P. Q. & R. to sit up in pain and surprise. Old Jeff Keeler, furious at the betrayal of Haines, was on the point of issuing orders to apply the screws when something happened to change his mind.

"Lady to see you, Mr. Tinker," Miss Kerwin announced, and laid upon the fix-it specialist's desk the card of Mrs. Jefferson Peabody Keeler.

"Ah," he breathed, rubbing his hands together, "I've been expecting the lady. Pray show her in."

Mrs. Jefferson Peabody Keeler entered. "I demand to be informed," she began in the large, cool, contemptuous manner of well-fed, protected ladies who have never had their hands in dishwater, "the meaning of your peremptory summons over the telephone, Mr.—ah—Tinker."

He waved her to a seat, and as he gazed upon her plump, well-preserved countenance, one might have observed in his eyes that slightly greenish tint that always presaged evil to the object of his gaze.

"Six months ago, Mrs. Keeler," he began, "you tendered Mrs. Tinker a luncheon at the Escholtzia Club."

"I had to," she replied haughtily. "You know that very well."

"Later, when Mrs. Tinker's name came up for membership, you black-balled her. You didn't have to do that."

She was silent, watching him with a defiant and amused smile. "You hurt Mrs. Tinker's feelings," he went on, "and your husband was placed in the position of having handed me the double-cross. I had a verbal contract with Mr. Keeler, and he guaranteed its fulfilment. You made a monkey of me, Mrs. Keeler—and taught me the utter fallacy of dealing with a man when one expects a woman to deliver the goods. Consequently, I have sent for you to talk business direct. I want Mrs. Tinker unanimously elected a member of the Escholtzia Club, of which you are now president."

Mrs. Jefferson Peabody Keeler smiled at him in frank amusement. Perhaps there was a little of contempt in that smile, also.

"And if I decline?" she queried, with arching brows.

"I'll put your husband in San Quentin Penitentiary for a few years to reflect upon the impropriety of instigating an election fraud in the recent contest waged between the candidates of the P. Q. & R. Railroad and my friend Thomas L. Briggs, of Fair Oaks, Madrone County. Of course, you have no knowledge of your husband's multifarious affairs, but politics is

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one of them. In justice to him I do not believe he contemplated any election frauds in the beginning, but I desired that he should, and so I put half a dozen honest crooks of my acquaintance on the pay-roll and sent them up to Madrone County to get acquainted with your husband's political representative in Fair Oaks—one Jim Logan. Mr. Logan was quick to realize that they were crooks, and when one of them innocently proposed a brilliant scheme for stealing votes from my friend Tom Briggs, Jim Logan was lobster enough to fall for it.

"An exposition of the means employed in this affair would be very illuminating to a man, Mrs. Keeler, but scarcely interesting to a woman. Suffice the fact that the frame-up worked nicely. My men arranged to be caught marring Briggs ballots.

"Do you see how the thing shapes up? The evidence was there, and the men have confessed to the Madrone County authorities, implicating Jim Logan, who in turn has been arrested and confessed, hoping to be given an immunity bath when the case comes to trial. The trail leads directly to your husband, Mrs. Keeler. I've got him cold. I wanted him; I framed it for him, and now I've got him; and it's up to you to see to it that Mrs. Tinker breaks into the Escholtzia Club before your husband breaks into the penitentiary. 'You pays your money, and you takes your choice.' I have explained this situation to you, Mrs. Keeler, and the interview is now at an end. I would suggest that you take up the details with your husband. I imagine he'll corroborate my suggestion that you hearken to the call of reason."

He rose and bowed profoundly. "I wish you good afternoon, Mrs. Keeler."

For the last time in this story—Mr. Tiberius Tinker alone in his private office. Before him is a large sheet of foolscap covered with figures and writing, while across the top of the sheet is written: "J. P. Keeler, in account with Tiberius Tinker." The account figures up exactly five thousand dollars.

Mr. Tinker ran his hand through his foretop, shook his head sorrowfully and gazed at the account.

He sighed. "By all the rules in the book of my dead past, I ought to have made old Jeff reimburse me for my cash outlay, in addition to making his wife perform, before I surrendered those confessions to him and told Reddy to turn Jim Logan loose for lack of evidence. Still, I haven't any quarrel with the old rascal—so why should I turn shyster and string him, now that I'm respectable and Pearly is about to take her place in high society? That membership in the Escholtzia Club came high, but we had to have it, and it will come as a delightful surprise to Pearly—God bless her."

He sat there, wrapped in an aura of pleasant thoughts, which were presently interrupted by the ringing of the telephone on his desk. He answered and discovered it was his stenographer speaking from the extension line in the general office.

"Mrs. Tinker is here to see you."

Tinker smiled like a Hallowe'en pumpkin. "Miss Kerwin," he queried, "does she look happy?"

"I should say so!"

He hung up, stepped to the door and beckoned to Pearly, who came running to greet him. He closed the door, kissed her, and stood looking at her and smiling expectantly.

"Well," he said presently, "what's it all about, Pearly? You're as smiling as the motion picture of Little Eva's soul mounting to heaven."

"Oh, Tib," she declared, "this is the happiest day of my life. Guess what has happened?"

"I couldn't guess in a thousand years," he lied, like the gentleman he was trying to be. "Out with it."

"My name was proposed for membership at the Escholtzia Club again, without my knowledge, dear, and what do you think? I was unanimously elected!"

"Three long, loud, raucous cheers!" he cried. "By George, sweetheart, that's the best news I've heard in years. It's vindication; that's what it is."

"It was the dearest wish of my life to belong to that club—once," Pearly affirmed, "and after having been black-balled, twice, naturally nothing could have pleased me more than the information that I had been unanimously elected. So the moment I received the secretary's letter I sat down and wrote her a courteous letter of thanks for the unsolicited compliment, and informed her that my self-respect would not possibly admit of my association with such an organization. I did—truly, Tib! And oh, wasn't it good to be able to get back at the old cats like that! They didn't think I was a lady, and I wanted to show them I was! Dearie, I wouldn't have missed the opportunity for five thousand dollars. That false-alarm bunch of old society hens! They make me sick!"

Mr. Tinker blinked. Hoping to please Pearly, he had planned for a grand surprise, and he had succeeded beyond his wildest expectations. As he stood there, almost groggy with this newly acquired knowledge that women have their own peculiar methods of enjoyment, which change from day to day, a thought slowly formed and worked its way through the fogs of his intellect. Grinning a fixed, immovable grin, he sidled to his desk, crushed into a compact little ball the record of his expenses in the Jeff Keeler campaign, and carelessly tossed it into the wastebasket. He had decided that if there had ever been an occasion in his eventful career when it was up to him to be a gentleman, this was it.

"Worth it!" he managed to articulate. "Well, I should say so! The consummate crust of that superannuated collection of stocking knitters! Good for you, Pearly! You made them exactly the right answer. Now that it's all over, I might as well tell you that I was never very strong for that gang myself, though of course I would be the last person on earth to enter an objection to your joining anything that would add to your happiness, my love. But I'm really glad you've got this society bee out of your bonnet."

Pearly clapped her hands delightedly. "Oh, Tib," she cried, "Can't you just *see* them when they get my letter!"

"Ha-ha-ha!" the perfidious man chortled. He turned to the window, and with his back to Pearly his lips framed a silent sentence.

"Five thousand iron men! And she kicked it away like that!"

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The Door in the Wall

By H. G. WELLS

Drawing by T. K. Hanna

ONE CONFIDENTIAL EVENING, not three months ago, Lionel Wallace told me this story of the Door in the Wall. And at the time I thought that so far as he was concerned it was a true story.

He told it me with such a direct simplicity of conviction that I could not do otherwise than believe in him. But in the morning, in my own flat, I woke to a different atmosphere; and as I lay in bed and recalled the things he had told me, stripped of the glamour of his earnest slow voice, denuded of the focused, shaded table light, the shadowy atmosphere that wrapped about him and me, and the pleasant bright things, the dessert and glasses and napery of the dinner we had shared, making them for the time a bright little world quite cut off from everyday realities, I saw it all as frankly incredible. "He was mystifying!" I said, and then: "How well he did it! . . . It isn't quite the thing I should have expected him, of all people, to do well."

Afterwards, as I sat up in bed and sipped my morning tea, I found myself trying to account for the flavour of reality that perplexed me in his impossible reminiscences, by supposing they did in some way suggest, present, convey—I hardly know which word to use—experiences it was otherwise impossible to tell.

Well, I don't resort to that explanation now. I have got over my intervening doubts. I believe now, as I believed at the moment of telling, that Wallace did to the very best of his ability strip the truth of his secret for me. But whether he himself saw, or only thought he saw; whether he himself was the possessor of an inestimable privilege or the victim of a fantastic dream, I cannot pretend to guess. Even the facts of his death, which ended my doubts forever, throw no light on that.

That much the reader must judge for himself.

I forget now what chance comment or criticism of mine moved so reticent a man to confide in me. He was, I think, defending himself against an imputation of slackness and unreliability I had made in relation to a great public movement, in which he had disappointed me. But he plunged suddenly. "I have," he said, "a preoccupation——

"I know," he went on, after a pause, "I have been negligent. The fact is—it isn't a case of ghosts or apparitions—but—it's an odd thing to tell of, Redmond—I am haunted. I am haunted by something—that rather takes the light out of things, that fills me with longings. . . ."

He paused, checked by that English shyness that so often overcomes us when we would speak of moving or grave or beautiful things. "You were at Saint Althelstan's all through," he said, and for a moment that seemed to me quite irrelevant. "Well"—and he paused. Then, very haltingly at first, but afterwards more easily, he began to tell of the thing that was hidden in his life, the haunting memory of a beauty and a happiness that filled his heart with insatiable longings, that made all the interests and spectacle of worldly life seem dull and tedious and vain to him.

Now that I have the clue to it, the thing seems written visibly in his face. I have a photograph in which that look of detachment has been caught and intensified. It reminds me of what a woman once said of him—a woman who had loved him greatly. "Suddenly," she said, "the interest goes out of him. He forgets you. He doesn't care a rap for you—under his very nose . . ."

Yet the interest was not always out of him, and when he was holding his attention to a thing Wallace could contrive to be an extremely successful man. His career, indeed, is set with successes. He left me behind him long ago; he soared up over my head, and cut a figure in the world that I couldn't cut—anyhow. He was still a year short of forty, and they say now that he would have been in office and very probably in the new Cabinet if he had lived. At school he always beat me without effort—as it were by nature. We were at school together at Saint Althelstan's College in West Kensington for almost all our school-time. He came into the school as my co-equal, but he left far above me, in a blaze of scholarships and brilliant performance. Yet I think I made a fair average running. And it was at school I heard first of the Door in the Wall—that I was to hear of a second time only a month before his death.

To him at least the Door in the Wall was a real door, leading through a real wall to immortal realities. Of that I am now quite assured.

And it came into his life quite early, when he was a little fellow between five and six. I remember how,

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as he sat making his confession to me with a slow gravity, he reasoned and reckoned the date of it. "There was," he said, "a crimson Virginia creeper in it—all one bright uniform crimson, in a clear amber sunshine against a white wall. That came into the impression somehow, though I don't clearly remember how, and there were horse-chestnut leaves upon the clean pavement outside the green door. They were blotched yellow and green, you know, not brown nor dirty, so that they must have been new fallen. I take it that means October. I look out for horse-chestnut leaves every year, and I ought to know.

"If I'm right in that, I was about five years and four months old."

He was, he said, rather a precocious little boy—he learned to talk at an abnormally early age, and he was so sane and "old-fashioned," as people say, that he was permitted an amount of initiative that most children scarcely attain by seven or eight. His mother died when he was two, and he was under the less vigilant and authoritative care of a nursery governess. His father was a stern, preoccupied lawyer, who gave him little attention and expected great things of him. For all his brightness he found life gray and dull, I think. And one day he wandered.

He could not recall the particular neglect that enabled him to get away, nor the course he took among the West Kensington roads. All that had faded among the incurable blurs of memory. But the white wall and the green door stood out quite distinctly.

As his memory of that childish experience ran, he did at the very first sight of that door experience a peculiar emotion, an attraction, a desire to get to the door and open it and walk in. And at the same time he had the clearest conviction that either it was unwise or it was wrong of him—he could not tell which—to yield to this attraction. He insisted upon it as a curious thing that he knew from the very beginning—unless memory has played him the queerest trick—that the door was unfastened, and that he could go in as he chose.

I seem to see the figure of that little boy, drawn and repelled. And it was very clear in his mind, too, though why it should be so was never explained, that his father would be very angry if he went in through that door.

Wallace described all these moments of hesitation to me with the utmost particularity. He went right past the door, and then, with his hands in his pockets and making an infantile attempt to whistle, strolled right along beyond the end of the wall. There he recalls a number of mean dirty shops, and particularly that of a plumber and decorator with a dusty disorder of earthenware pipes, sheet lead, ball taps, pattern books of wall paper, and tins of enamel. He stood pretending to examine these things, and *coveting*, passionately desiring, the green door.

Then, he said, he had a gust of emotion. He made a run for it, lest hesitation should grip him again; he went plump with outstretched hand through the green door and let it slam behind him. And so, in a trice, he came into the garden that has haunted all his life.

It was very difficult for Wallace to give me his full sense of that garden into which he came.

There was something in the very air of it that exhilarated, that gave one a sense of lightness and good happening and well-being; there was something in the sight of it that made all its colour clean and perfect and subtly luminous. In the instant of coming into it one was exquisitely glad—as only in rare moments, and when one is young and joyful one can be glad in this world. And everything was beautiful there. . . .

Wallace mused before he went on telling me. "You see," he said, with the doubtful inflection of a man who pauses at incredible things, "there were two great panthers there. . . . Yes, spotted panthers. And I was not afraid. There was a long wide path with marble-edged flower borders on either side, and these two huge velvety beasts were playing there with a ball. One looked up and came towards me, a little curious as it seemed. It came right up to me, rubbed its soft round ear very gently against the small hand I held out, and purred. It was, I tell you, an enchanted garden. I know. And the size? Oh! it stretched far and wide, this way and that. I believe there were hills far away. Heaven knows where West Kensington had suddenly got to. And somehow it was just like coming home.

"You know, in the very moment the door swung to behind me, I forgot the road with its fallen chestnut leaves, its cabs and tradesmen's carts, I forgot the sort of gravitational pull back to the discipline and obedience of home, I forgot all hesitations and fear, forgot discretion, forgot all the intimate realities of this life. I became in a moment a very glad and wonder-happy little boy—in another world. It was a world with a different quality, a warmer, more penetrating and mellower light, with a faint clear gladness in its air, and wisps of sun-touched cloud in the blueness of its sky. And before me ran this long wide path, invitingly, with weedless beds on either side, rich with untended flowers, and these two great panthers. I put my little hands fearlessly on their soft fur, and caressed their round ears and the sensitive corners under their ears, and played with them, and it was as though they welcomed me home. There was a keen sense of home-coming in my mind, and when presently a tall, fair girl appeared in the pathway and came to meet me, smiling, and said 'Well?' to me, and lifted me and kissed me, and put me down and led me by the hand, there was no amazement, but only an impression of delightful rightness, of being reminded of happy things that had in some strange way been overlooked. There were broad red steps, I remember, that came into view between spikes of delphinium, and up these we went to a great avenue between very old and shady dark trees. All down this avenue, you know, between the red chapped stems, were marble seats of honour, and statuary, and very tame and friendly white doves. . . .

"Along this cool avenue my girl friend led me, looking down—I recall the pleasant lines, the finely-modeled chin of her sweet kind face—asking me questions in a soft, agreeable voice, and telling me things, pleasant things, I know, though what they were I was never able to recall. . . . Presently a Capuchin

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monkey, very clean, with a fur of ruddy brown and kindly hazel eyes, came down a tree to us and ran beside me, looking up at me and grinning, and presently leaped to my shoulder. So we two went on our way in great happiness."

He paused.

"Go on," I said.

"I remember little things. We passed an old man musing among laurels, I remember, and a place gay with paroquets, and came through a broad shaded colonnade to a spacious cool palace, full of pleasant fountains, full of beautiful things, full of the quality and promise of heart's desire. And there were many things and many people, some that still seem to stand out clearly and some that are vaguer; but all these people were beautiful and kind. In some way—I don't know how—it was conveyed to me that they all were kind to me, glad to have me there, and filling me with gladness by their gestures, by the touch of their hands, by the welcome and love in their eyes. Yes—"

He mused for a while. "Playmates I found there. That was very much to me, because I was a lonely little boy. They played delightful games in a grass-covered court where there was a sun-dial set about with flowers. And as one played one loved. . . .

"But—it's odd—there's a gap in my memory. I don't remember the games we played. I never remembered. Afterwards, as a child, I spent long hours trying, even with tears, to recall the form of that happiness. I wanted to play it all over again—in my nursery—by myself. No! All I remember is the happiness and two dear playfellows who were most with me. . . . Then presently came a sombre, dark woman, with a grave, pale face and dreamy eyes, a sombre woman, wearing a soft long robe of pale purple, who carried a book, and beckoned and took me aside with her into a gallery above a hall—though my playmates were loth to have me go, and ceased their game and stood watching as I was carried away. 'Come back to us!' they cried. 'Come back to us soon!' I looked up at her face, but she heeded them not at all. Her face was very gentle and grave. She took me to a seat in the gallery, and I stood beside her, ready to look at her book as she opened it upon her knee. The pages fell open. She pointed, and I looked, marveling, for in the living pages of that book I saw myself; it was a story about myself, and in it were all the things that had happened to me since ever I was born. . . .

"It was wonderful to me, because the pages of that book were not pictures, you understand, but realities."

Wallace paused gravely—looked at me doubtfully.

"Go on," I said. "I understand."

"THEY WERE REALITIES—yes, they must have been; people moved and things came and went in them; my dear mother, whom I had near forgotten; then my father, stern and upright, the servants, the nursery, all the familiar things of home. Then the front door and the busy streets, with traffic to and fro. I looked and marveled, and looked half doubtfully again into the woman's face and turned the pages over, skipping this and that, to see more of this book and more, and so at last I came to myself hovering and hesitating outside the green door in the long white wall, and felt again the conflict and the fear.

"'And next?' I cried, and would have turned on, but the cool hand of the grave woman delayed me.

"'Next?' I insisted, and struggled gently with her hand, pulling up her fingers with all my childish strength, and as she yielded and the page came over she bent down upon me like a shadow and kissed my brow.

"But the page did not show the enchanted garden, nor the panthers, nor the girl who had led me by the hand, nor the playfellows who had been so loth to let me go. It showed a long gray street in West Kensington, in that chill hour of afternoon before the lamps are lit; and I was there, a wretched little figure, weeping aloud, for all that I could do to restrain myself, and I was weeping because I could not return to my dear playfellows who had called after me, 'Come back to us! Come back to us soon!' I was there. This was no page in a book, but harsh reality; that enchanted place and the restraining hand of the grave mother at whose knee I stood had gone—whither had they gone?"

He halted again, and remained for a time staring into the fire.

"Oh! the woefulness of that return!" he murmured.

"Well?" I said, after a minute or so.

"POOR LITTLE WRETCH I was!—brought back to this gray world again! As I realized the fulness of what had happened to me, I gave way to quite ungovernable grief. And the shame and humiliation of that public weeping and my disgraceful home-coming remain with me still. I see again the benevolent-looking old gentleman in gold spectacles who stopped and spoke to me—prodding me first with his umbrella. 'Poor little chap,' said he; 'and are you lost, then?'—and me a London boy of five and more! And he must needs bring in a kindly young policeman and make a crowd of me, and so march me home. Sobbing, conspicuous, and frightened, I came back from the enchanted garden to the steps of my father's house.

"That is as well as I can remember my vision of that garden—the garden that haunts me still. Of course, I can convey nothing of that indescribable quality of translucent unreality, that *difference* from the common things of experience that hung about it all; but that—that is what happened. If it was a dream, I am sure it was a daytime and altogether extraordinary dream. . . . H'm!—naturally there followed a terrible questioning, by my aunt, my father, the nurse, the governess—everyone. . . .

"I tried to tell them, and my father gave me my first thrashing for telling lies. When afterwards I tried to tell my aunt, she punished me again for my wicked persistence. Then, as I said, everyone was forbidden to listen to me, to hear a word about it. Even my fairy-tale books were taken away from me for a time—because I was too 'imaginative.' Eh? Yes, they did that! My father belonged to the old school. . . . And my story was driven back upon myself. I whispered it to my pillow—my pillow that was often damp and salt to my whispering lips with childish tears. And I added always to my official and

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less fervent prayers this one heartfelt request: 'Please God I may dream of the garden. Oh! take me back to my garden!' Take me back to my garden! I dreamt often of the garden. I may have added to it, I may have changed it; I do not know. . . . All this, you understand, is an attempt to reconstruct from fragmentary memories a very early experience. Between that and the other consecutive memories of my boyhood there is a gulf. A time came when it seemed impossible I should ever speak of that wonder glimpse again."

I asked an obvious question.

"No," he said. "I don't remember that I ever attempted to find my way back to the garden in those early years. This seems odd to me now, but I think that very probably a closer watch was kept on my movements after this misadventure to prevent my going astray. No, it wasn't till you knew me that I tried for the garden again. And I believe there was a period—incredible as it seems now—when I forgot the garden altogether—when I was about eight or nine it may have been. Do you remember me as a kid at Saint Althelstan's?"

"Rather!"

"I didn't show any signs, did I, in those days of having a secret dream?"

He looked up with a sudden smile.

"Did you ever play North-West Passage with me? . . . No, of course you didn't come my way!"

"It was the sort of game," he went on, "that every imaginative child plays all day. The idea was the discovery of a North-West Passage to school. The way to school was plain enough; the game consisted in finding some way that wasn't plain, starting off ten minutes early in some almost hopeless direction, and working my way round through unaccustomed streets to my goal. And one day I got entangled among some rather low-class streets on the other side of Campden Hill, and I began to think that for once the game would be against me and that I should get to school late. I tried rather desperately a street that seemed a *cul-de-sac,* and found a passage at the end. I hurried through that with renewed hope. 'I shall do it yet,' I said, and passed a row of frowsy little shops that were inexplicably familiar to me, and behold! there was my long white wall and the green door that led to the enchanted garden!

"The thing whacked upon me suddenly. Then, after all, that garden, that wonderful garden, wasn't a dream!"

He paused.

"I suppose my second experience with the green door marks the world of difference there is between the busy life of a schoolboy and the infinite leisure of a child. Anyhow, this second time I didn't for a moment think of going in straightway. You see— For one thing, my mind was full of the idea of getting to school in time—set on not breaking my record for punctuality. I must surely have felt *some* little desire at least to try the door—yes. I must have felt that. . . . But I seem to remember the attraction of the door mainly as another obstacle to my overmastering determination to get to school. I was immensely interested by this discovery I had made, of course—I went on with my mind full of it—but I went on. It didn't check me. I ran past, tugging out my watch, found I had ten minutes still to spare, and then I was going downhill into familiar surroundings. I got to school, breathless, it is true, and wet with perspiration, but in time. I can remember hanging up my coat and hat. . . . Went right by it and left it behind me. Odd, eh?"

He looked at me thoughtfully. "Of course I didn't know then that it wouldn't always be there. Schoolboys have limited imaginations. I suppose I thought it was an awfully jolly thing to have it there, to know my way back to it; but there was the school tugging at me. I expect I was a good deal distraught and inattentive that morning, recalling what I could of the beautiful strange people I should presently see again. Oddly enough, I had no doubt in my mind that they would be glad to see me. . . . Yes, I must have thought of the garden that morning just as a jolly sort of place to which one might resort in the interludes of a strenuous scholastic career.

"I didn't go that day at all. The next day was a half-holiday, and that may have weighed with me. Perhaps, too, my state of inattention brought down impositions upon me, and docked the margin of time necessary for the *détour.* I don't know. What I do know is that in the meantime the enchanted garden was so much upon my mind that I could not keep it to myself.

"I told—what was his name?—a ferrety-looking youngster we used to call Squiff."

"Young Hopkins," said I.

"Hopkins it was. I did not like telling him. I had a feeling that in some way it was against the rules to tell him, but I did. He was walking part of the way home with me; he was talkative, and if we had not talked about the enchanted garden we should have talked of something else, and it was intolerable to me to think about any other subject. So I blabbed.

"Well, he told my secret. The next day in the play interval I found myself surrounded by half a dozen bigger boys, half teasing, and wholly curious to hear more of the enchanted garden. There was that big Fawcett—you remember him?—and Carnaby and Morley Reynolds. You weren't there, by any chance? No, you weren't; I think I should have remembered if you had been. . . .

"A boy is a creature of odd feelings. I was, I really believe, in spite of my secret self-disgust, a little flattered to have the attention of these big fellows. I remember particularly a moment of pleasure caused by the praise of Crawshaw—you remember Crawshaw major, the son of Crawshaw the composer?—who said it was the best lie he had ever heard. But at the same time there was a really painful undertow of shame at telling what I felt was indeed a sacred secret. That beast Fawcett made a joke about the girl in green—"

Wallace's voice sank with the keen memory of that shame. "I pretended not to hear," he said. "Well, then Carnaby suddenly called me a young liar, and disputed with me when I said the thing was true. I said I knew where to find the green door, could lead them all there in ten minutes. Carnaby became outrage-

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ously virtuous, and said I'd have to—and bear out my words or suffer. Did you ever have Carnaby twist your arm? Then perhaps you'll understand how it went with me. I swore my story was true. There was nobody in the school then to save a chap from Carnaby, though Crawshaw put in a word or so. Carnaby had got his game. I grew excited and red-eared, and a little frightened. I behaved altogether like a silly little chap, and the outcome of it all was that instead of starting alone for my enchanted garden, I led the way presently—cheeks flushed, ears hot, eyes smarting, and my soul one burning misery and shame—for a party of six mocking, curious, and threatening schoolfellows.

"We never found the white wall and the green door. . . ."

"You mean——?"

"I mean I couldn't find it. I would have found it if I could.

"And afterwards when I could go alone I couldn't find it. I never found it. I seem now to have been always looking for it through my school-boy days, but I never came upon it—never."

"Did the fellows—make it disagreeable?"

"Beastly. . . . Carnaby held a council over me for wanton lying. I remember how I sneaked home and upstairs to hide the marks of my blubbering. But when I cried myself to sleep at last it wasn't for Carnaby, but for the garden, for the beautiful afternoon I had hoped for, for the sweet friendly women and the waiting playfellows, and the game I had hoped to learn again, that beautiful forgotten game. . . .

"I believed firmly that if I had not told—— . . . I had bad times after that—crying at night and wool-gathering by day. For two terms I slacked and had bad reports. Do you remember? Of course you would! It was *you*—your beating me in mathematics that brought me back to the grind again."

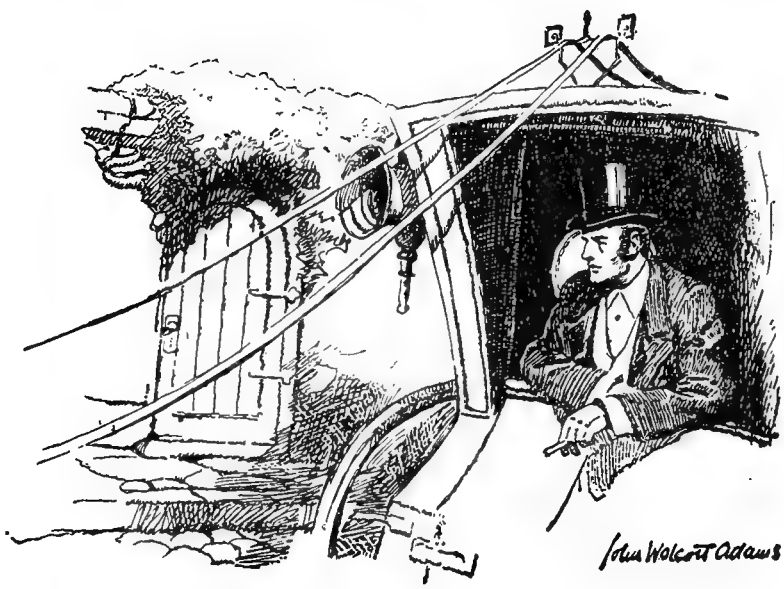
For a time my friend stared silently into the red heart of the fire. Then he said: "I never saw it again until I was seventeen.

"It leaped upon me for the third time—as I was driving to Paddington on my way to Oxford and a scholarship. I had just one momentary glimpse. I was leaning over the apron of my hansom smoking a cigarette, and no doubt thinking myself no end of a man of the world, and suddenly there was the door, the wall, the dear sense of unforgettable and still attainable things.

"We clattered by—I too taken by surprise to stop my cab until we were well past and round a corner. Then I had a queer moment, a double and divergent movement of my will: I tapped the little door in the roof of the cab, and brought my arm down to pull out my watch. 'Yes, sir!' said the cabman, smartly. 'Er—well—it's nothing,' I cried. '*My* mistake! We haven't much time! Go on!' And he went on. . . .

"I got my scholarship. And the night after I was told of that I sat over my fire in my little upper room, my study, in my father's house, with his praise—his rare praise—and his sound counsels ringing in my ears, and I smoked my favourite pipe—the formidable bulldog of adolescence—and thought of that door in the long white wall. 'If I had stopped,' I thought, 'I should have missed my scholarship, I should have missed Oxford—muddled all the fine career before me! I began to see things better!' I fell musing deeply, but I did not doubt then this career of mine was a thing that merited sacrifice.

"Those dear friends and that clear atmosphere seemed very sweet to me, very fine but remote. My grip was fixing now upon the world. I saw another door opening—the door of my career."



"I never saw it again until I was seventeen."

He stared again into the fire. Its red light picked out a stubborn strength in his face for just one flickering moment, and then it vanished again.

"Well," he said, and sighed, "I have served that career. I have done—much work, much hard work. But I have dreamt of the enchanted garden a thousand dreams, and seen its door, or at least glimpsed its door, four times since then. Yes—four times. For a while this world was so bright and interesting, seemed so full of meaning and opportunity, that the half-effaced charm of the garden was by comparison gentle and remote. Who wants to pat panthers on the way to dinner with pretty women and distinguished men? I came down to London from Oxford, a man of bold promise that I have done something to redeem. Something—and yet there have been disappointments. . . .

"Twice I have been in love—I will not dwell on that—but once, as I went to some one who, I knew, doubted whether I dared to come, I took a short cut at a venture through an unfrequented road near Earl's Court, and so happened on a white wall and a familiar green door. 'Odd!' said I to myself, 'but I thought this place was on Campden Hill. It's the place I never could find somehow—like counting Stonehenge—the place of that queer daydream of mine.' And I went by it intent upon my purpose. It had no appeal to me that afternoon.

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"I had just a moment's impulse to try the door, three steps aside were needed at the most—though I was sure enough in my heart that it would open to me—and then I thought that doing so might delay me on the way to that appointment in which my honour was involved. Afterwards I was sorry for my punctuality—I might at least have peeped in and waved a hand to those panthers, but I knew enough by this time not to seek again belatedly that which is not found by seeking. Yes, that time made me very sorry. . . .

"Years of hard work after that, and never a sight of the door. It's only recently it has come back to me. With it there has come a sense as though some thin tarnish had spread itself over my world. I began to think of it as a sorrowful and bitter thing that I should never see that door again. Perhaps I was suffering a little from overwork—perhaps it was what I've heard spoken of as the feeling of forty. I don't know. But certainly the keen brightness that makes effort easy has gone out of things recently, and that just at a time—with all these new political developments—when I ought to be working. Odd, isn't it? But I do begin to find life toilsome; its rewards, as I come near them, cheap. I began a little while ago to want the garden quite badly. Yes—and I've seen it three times."

"The garden?"

"No—the door! And I haven't gone in!"

He leaned over the table to me, with an enormous sorrow in his voice as he spoke. "Thrice I have had my chance—*thrice!* If ever that door offers itself to me again, I swore, I will go in, out of this dust and heat, out of this dry glitter of vanity, out of these toilsome futilities. I will go and never return. This time I will stay. . . . I swore it, and when the time came—*I didn't go.*

"Three times in one year have I passed that door and failed to enter. Three times in the last year.

"The first time was on the night of the snatch division on the Tenants' Redemption Bill, on which the Government was saved by a majority of three. You remember? No one on our side—perhaps very few on the opposite side—expected the end that night. Then the debate collapsed like eggshells. I and Hotchkiss were dining with his cousin at Brentford; we were both unpaired, and we were called up by telephone, and set off at once in his cousin's motor. We got in barely in time, and on the way we passed my wall and door—livid in the moonlight, blotched with hot yellow as the glare of our lamps lit it, but unmistakable. 'My God!' cried I. 'What?' said Hotchkiss. 'Nothing!' I answered, and the moment passed.

"'I've made a great sacrifice,' I told the whip as I got in. 'They all have,' he said, and hurried by.

"I DO NOT SEE how I could have done otherwise then. And the next occasion was as I rushed to my father's bedside to bid that stern old man farewell. Then, too, the claims of life were imperative. But the third time was different; it happened a week ago. It fills me with hot remorse to recall it. I was with Gurker and Ralphs—it's no secret now, you know, that I've had my talk with Gurker. We had been dining at Frobisher's, and the talk had become intimate between us. The question of my place in the reconstructed Ministry lay always just over the boundary of the discussion. Yes—yes. That's all settled. It needn't be talked about yet, but there's no reason to keep a secret from you. . . . Yes—thanks! thanks! But let me tell you my story.

"Then, on that night things were very much in the air. My position was a very delicate one. I was keenly anxious to get some definite word from Gurker, but was hampered by Ralphs' presence. I was using the best power of my brain to keep that light and careless talk not too obviously directed to the point that concerned me. I had to. Ralphs' behaviour since has more than justified my caution. . . . Ralphs, I knew, would leave us beyond the Kensington High Street, and then I could surprise Gurker by a sudden frankness. One has sometimes to resort to these little devices. . . . And then it was that in the margin of my field of vision I became aware once more of the white wall, the green door before us down the road.

"WE PASSED IT talking. I passed it. I can still see the shadow of Gurker's marked profile, his opera hat tilted forward over his prominent nose, the many folds of his muffler going before my shadow and Ralphs' as we sauntered past.

"I passed within twenty inches of the door. 'If I say good-night to them, and go in,' I asked myself, 'what will happen?' And I was all a-tingle for that word with Gurker.

"I could not answer that question in the tangle of my other problems. 'They will think me mad,' I thought. 'And suppose I vanish now!—Amazing disappearance of a prominent politician!' That weighed with me. A thousand inconceivably petty worldlinesses weighed with me in that crisis."

Then he turned on me with a sorrowful smile, and, speaking slowly, "Here I am!" he said.

"Here I am!" he repeated, "and my chance has gone from me. Three times in one year the door has been offered me—the door that goes into peace, into delight, into a beauty beyond dreaming, a kindness no man on earth can know. And I have rejected it, Redmond, and it has gone——"

"How do you know?"

"I know. I know. I am left now to work it out, to stick to the tasks that held me so strongly when my moments came. You say I have success—this vulgar, tawdry, irksome, envied thing. I have it." He had a walnut in his big hand. "If that was my success," he said, and crushed it, and held it out for me to see.

"Let me tell you something, Redmond. This loss is destroying me. For two months, for ten weeks nearly now, I have done no work at all, except the most necessary and urgent duties. My soul is full of inappeasable regrets. At nights—when it is less likely I shall be recognized—I go out. I wander. Yes. I wonder what people would think of that if they knew. A Cabinet Minister, the responsible head of that most vital of all departments, wandering alone—grieving—sometimes near audibly lamenting—for a door, for a garden!"

I can see now his rather pallid face, and the unfamiliar sombre fire that had come into his eyes. I

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see him very vividly tonight. I sit recalling his words, his tones; and last evening's *Westminster Gazette* still lies on my sofa, containing the notice of his death. At lunch today the club was busy with his death. We talked of nothing else.

They found his body very early yesterday morning, in a deep excavation near East Kensington Station. It is one of two shafts that have been made in connection with an extension of the railway southward. It is protected from the intrusion of the public by a hoarding upon the high road, in which a small doorway has been cut for the convenience of some of the workmen who live in that direction. The doorway was left unfastened through a misunderstanding between two gangers, and through it he made his way.

My mind is darkened with questions and riddles.

It would seem he walked all the way from the House that night—he has frequently walked home during the past Session—and so it is I figure his dark form coming along the late and empty streets, wrapped up, intent. And then did the pale electric lights near the station cheat the rough planking into a semblance of white? Did that fatal door awaken some memory?

Was there, after all, ever any green door in the wall at all?

I do not know. I have told his story as he told it to me. There are times when I believe that Wallace was no more than the victim of the coincidence between a rare but not unprecedented type of hallucination and a careless trap, but that indeed is not my profoundest belief. You may think me superstitious, if you will, and foolish; but, indeed, I am more than half convinced that he had, in truth, an abnormal gift, and a sense, something—I know not what—that in the guise of wall and door offered him an outlet, a secret and peculiar passage of escape into another and altogether more beautiful world. At any rate, you will say, it betrayed him in the end. But did it betray him? There you touch the inmost mystery of these dreamers, these men of vision and the imagination. We see our world fair and common, the hoarding and the pit. By our daylight standard he walked out of security into darkness, danger, and death.

But did he see like that?

Old Books

By MARGARET WIDDEMER

The people up and down the world that talk and laugh and cry,
They're pleasant when you're young and gay, and life is all to try,
But when your heart is tired and dumb, your soul has need of ease,
There's none like the quiet folk who wait in libraries—
The counselors who never change, the friends who never go,
The old books, the dear books that understand and know!

"Why, this thing was over, child, and that deed was done,"
They say, "When Cleopatra died, two thousand years agone,
And this tale was spun for men and that jest was told
When Sappho was a singing-lass and Greece was very old,
And this thought you hide so close was sung along the wind
The day that young Orlando came a-courting Rosalind!"

The foolish thing that hurt you so your lips could never tell,
Your sister out of Babylon she knows its secret well,
The merriment you could not share with any on the earth,
Your brother from King Francis' court he leans to share your mirth,
For all the ways your feet must fare, the roads your heart must go,
The old books, the dear books, they understand and know!

You read your lover's hid heart plain beneath some dead lad's lace,
And in a glass from some Greek tomb you see your own wet face,
For they have stripped from out their souls the thing they could not speak
And strung it to a written song that you might come to seek,
And they have lifted out their hearts when they were beating new
And pinned them on a printed page and given them to you.

The people close beside you, all their hearts are dumb and young,
The kindest word they try to say it stumbles on the tongue,
Their hearts are only questing hearts, and though they strive and try,
Their softest touch may hurt you sore, their best word make you cry.
But still through all the years that come and all the dreams that go
The old books, the dear books, they understand and know!

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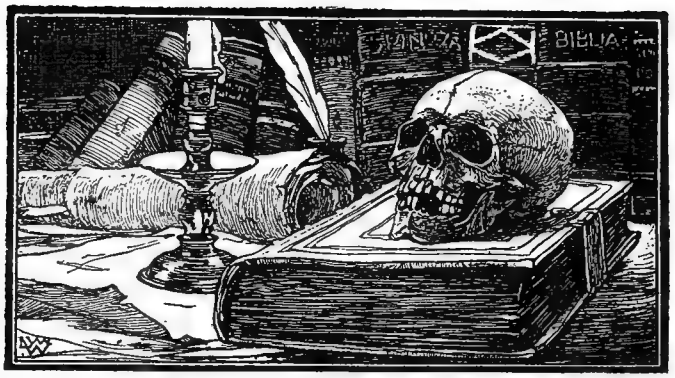

Drawn by W. R. Wenckebach
Reproduced from "The Studio"
(Special Winter Number).

By
MASSIMO
BONTEMPELLI

The Simple Cure

Translated by CESARINA HUDSON

Massimo Bontempelli

VERY FEW of my friends know that at one time I followed the profession of medicine. But it was only for a short time, many years ago, when I was living in Prague. In my hours of idleness I used to read certain books on the history of medieval magic, which I bought from a peddler who stopped with his little cart every day in the shadow of the statue of Charles IV.

My hours of idleness were many, because I had very few patients. To tell the truth, at the time of which I am speaking, I had only one patient, a woman. But idleness breeds laziness, and in a short time the trouble of visiting even that one patient became too much for me. Especially as she liked me to go and see her almost every day, and lived a long way off at the further end of Palackého trida, while the room I lodged in was almost on the slopes of Hradcany. But laziness is said to sharpen one's ingenuity, and through this woman I discovered a singular method of fulfilling my doctor's duties with the minimum of fatigue and trouble.

There is no need for me to dilate on the character of the lady. It will be enough for me to tell you that her name was Libussa Bohacek, and that she was not suffering from any acute illness; but—as sometimes happens in the case of well-to-do women—she enjoyed a variety of minor ailments. For these she expected my attendance every morning, or nearly every morning. Sometimes her heart would palpitate in an irregular manner, sometimes she thought she felt her brain aching inside her skull, one day her breathing would pain her, another she would feel as though a slow poison were circling through the intricate network of her arteries. At other times she would be troubled by more prosaic disorders in some more intimate portion of her anatomy.

My visits consisted of rapid examinations, and prescriptions, followed by long conversations on subjects which never grew stale, such as the fine weather or the rain, the fleeting nature of youth, the books we were reading, etc. It was precisely during one of these naïve conversations that chance, or else ever-vigilant Fortune, managed to sow the little seed of my discovery. We were talking of books, and I explained to her that I had been reading—as I said before—some histories of medieval magic, or rather, to be exact, some descriptions of the practice called *envoûtement*.

There is no need for you to have bought old treatises in the shadow of the statue of Charles IV. to know what *envoûtement* means: it is the operation by which you construct an image of wax, into which later, by special spells and magic formulæ, you infuse a part of the vitality of another human being. In this way the wax figure, even when taken far away from the person whom it represents, still remains mysteriously linked with him, so much so that if you pierce the wax with a hatpin, a similar real wound appears in the absent person, and by this means he may be safely and comfortably put out of the way.

The trials which took place in the Middle Ages for murders presumed to have been committed by means of *envoûtement* are celebrated, and there is no need for me to expatiate on them. This practice has also served the romantic fantasy of novelists and dramatists, and everyone has read of it, if nowhere else at least in *La Reine Margot*, by Dumas, and in *The Dream of an Autumn Sunset*, by d'Annunzio.

Mme. Bohacek was amused and interested by my tales, and seemed to half believe in them—a prudent position to take in matters of a like nature.

From those talks and that half-faith we were led, almost for fun in the beginning, to an extraordinary invention.

We tried an *envoûtement* of our own on improved lines and with beneficial intentions. (The ancient practice had for its only objects revenge and murder.)

We went to a most able craftsman, whom I had met in a waxwork show at a fair, and we had him construct a life-size figure, which resembled my patient as nearly as possible. The figure opened down the middle by means of four little brass knobs, and inside

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it was made just like the models which are used in schools of anatomy; there was the skeleton clothed in bands of muscle; there were the heart and the liver and the intestines and all the rest; even the brain, tucked away in the skull, even the two kidneys fastened up under the diaphragm. Everything was there that is needed to make up a man, or rather, in this case, a woman.

* * *

As soon as the statue was completed, I attempted, by following the instructions of my ancient treatises, and with the aid of a fortune-teller whom I managed to nose out in one of the back-alleys still existing in the Josefor, to exercise over it the more mysterious and important part of the practice of *envoûtement;* that is, to endow it with the vital force of the individual, and to make it capable of reproducing on the original (who in this case was Mme. Libussa Bohacek) all the physical modifications which I might propose to effect on her.

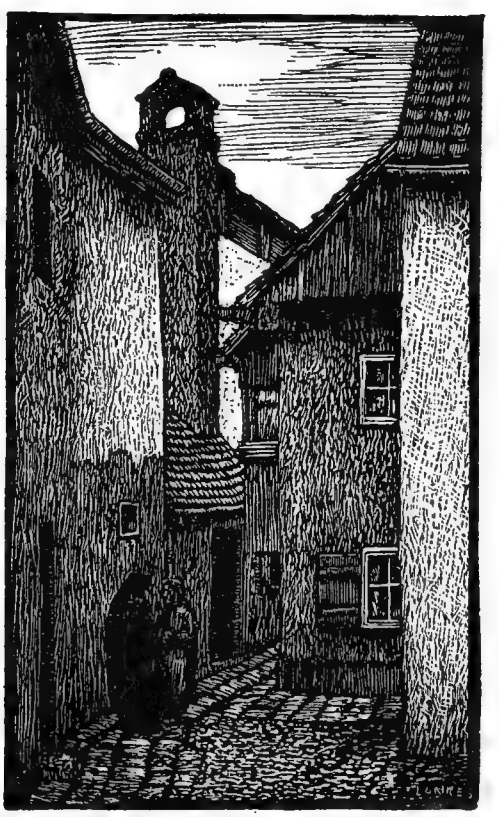
I shall not stop to reveal how I managed all this; first of all because I believe it is forbidden, and secondly because I cannot remember it.

The thing was a marvelous success. The lady showed her blind confidence in my worthy intentions by entrusting me with the statue. It was put in a long box, and I took it off in a cab to my house. Then I unpacked it carefully, and, so that it should be safely out of the way of any intruder, I laid it with infinite precautions on the top of a high terra-cotta stove which dominated one of the corners of my room.

I must confess that at night my slumbers were marred by troublesome dreams and nightmares. It was only at a very late hour that I managed to fall into a deep and quiet sleep. I woke up in the broad daylight feeling rested and refreshed. The strange doings of the day before seemed a faraway game. My room was already full of sunlight, and I turned round and looked up at the waxen image, which reached almost to the ceiling.

I dressed, and then, by means of a stool placed on a small table, which in its turn I dragged close to the stove, arranged a scaffold by which I might ascend and examine the statue in its every detail.

I clambered to the top of the erection, and from there I gazed at my statue for a few minutes. Then tenderly I opened it and examined its inside with great thoroughness. At a certain point my practised anatomical eye noted a small imperfection in the shape of the heart, a very slight swelling on its surface toward the exterior, so slight as to be hardly discernible.



Woodcut by J. J. Lankes

Could it be that I had not noticed it the day before? Or might it have appeared of itself during the night? Or perhaps it was merely the effect of the shaking in the cab?

I could not for the moment fix on a correct reply. But very gently, with two or three light pressures of my fingers, in the manner of a sculptor modeling some delicate detail in clay, I corrected the curves of the heart and reduced it to its normal proportions. Then I closed up the image.

I went out, with the key of my room safely in my pocket, and hurried anxiously across almost the whole length of the town to my patient's house.

"Madame Libussa," I said, without even remembering to wish her good-morning, "Madame Libussa, you suffered from slight palpitations this morning . . .?"

"Yes, doctor, but how . . .?"

"And they stopped?"

"Almost at once, doctor."

Breathlessly I related to her my experiment. We laughed together like two children, filled with wonderment and joy. After a short time I took my leave. But on the way home a skeptical doubt assailed me: perhaps the lady, hypnotized by my impetuous question, had suddenly thought that she had suffered from palpitations.

Next morning I decided to go more warily.

When I had opened the figure and examined it scrupulously, I remarked a slight distortion in the lower part of the intestine. With a thin bit of stick I set it right, arranging it neatly in its original curves. Then I rushed off to Palackého trida.

"How do you feel this morning, Madame?"

"Pretty well, but about nine o'clock I had . . . I cannot quite explain to you, doctor."

"Yes, yes, I understand perfectly. And is it still there?"

"Oh, no. I felt it for only half an hour, and then it went."

My triumph was complete.

* * *

Man does not continue to live in a state of wonderment, but in a very short time settles down to the strangest conditions. After a few days the thing began to seem perfectly natural to me, and my laziness took full advantage of the situation. Every morning, instead of walking directly across the town to visit the lady, I would examine the waxen image. Whenever I discovered the least deformation, whether it were in a lung or in kidney, in the liver or in the heart, in whatsoever part of the body, internally or externally, I would set it right, knowing meanwhile that by this simple method I had cured my absent patient.

After my second decisive

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experiment I went to see her again on two occasions, leaving an interval of four or five days between the visits. Neither time was I disappointed. Libussa too had grown quite accustomed to the new state of things, and ceased to feel any perplexity, curiosity, or astonishment whatsoever. I ended by not going there any more. I was most scrupulous, however, in conducting my examination almost every morning. The first few days I had not allowed anyone to enter my room, but after a little I determined to let the chambermaid come in every morning, after having made her swear that never, on any account, would she touch the image.

* * *

THREE MONTHS had passed, perhaps more, when I decided one morning that it would be a good thing to go and call on Mme. Bohacek, as a friend if not as a doctor. (I had, by the way, to present her with my bill, a thing which I could not do to the statue.) That day I was prevented from going by the unexpected arrival of an Italian friend who asked me to take him round the town and show him the sights. I did not get home until after midnight, and the next morning I woke up too late. I do not remember what it was that prevented my going the day after. On the fourth day, after having completed my daily inspection with the usual attention to details, I went out, absolutely determined to reach Palackého trida that morning.

But as soon as I got to the square near my house I discovered that there was not a single cab in the stand. A steady drizzle was beginning to fall. It was one of the first days of October. Notwithstanding the rain, I pushed on slowly toward the nearby bank of the Moldava, feeling all the time strangely out of humour and ill at ease. The water was gray, the air was gray, the rain fell more heavily. I was feeling cold. Winter had unexpectedly and heavily descended on the town, and I was not wearing an overcoat. I turned round and went home again.

As soon as I got inside a sudden feeling of well-being took possession of me. I was enfolded by a comforting and quite unexpected sense of warmth—the room was hot. I saw the fire shining in the bottom part of the stove. The thoughtful and kindly chambermaid had noticed how suddenly cold the weather had become. I praised her in my heart. Then I picked up a book and let myself sink into an armchair to enjoy the first delights of winter to their full in a well-heated room.

I had read hardly more than two or three lines when a sudden suspicion, or perhaps a subconscious inner warning—I do not know which—made me leap precipitately to my feet, turn round and look upward toward the place where the figure always stood. I turned cold with terror. It was no longer there!

I made as if to rush out and call the chambermaid when another and a more frightening thought caused me to stop short. I came back again, climbed up on to the table and looked at the flat top of the stove. I touched it: it was burning hot! I believe I gave a cry of terror.

There was not a trace of the statue, and I realized at once that it was completely and distressfully destroyed. It had melted, and I perceived perhaps a faint surviving odour of melted wax, but I was too desperate to analyze my sensations. Then all at once I gave a cry—this time I am certain of it—as I became aware of a new horror; on the burning surface of the stove lay four little brass objects, four knobs, the knobs which had been used to open and close the statue, grisly remains of my stupendous invention.

For a long time I stood there idiotically on the table, looking at the ghastly emptiness left by the missing figure. It needed a great effort to reach out my hand and touch and pick up the four relics. And then again suddenly a new and still more sinister thought assailed me, and I began to tremble as though in an epileptic fit. Libussa Bohacek? When at length I could manage to impart some reasonable movement to my limbs, I flung myself down off the table, rushed out, and under the pouring rain tore like a madman through the streets till I reached Palackého trida and neared my patient's house. Then I slowed down and tried to calm myself. I walked in at the principal great doorway. A woman *concierge* whom I had never seen before stopped me.

"Where are you going?"

"To see Mme. Bohacek."

"She does not live here."

"Oh . . . she used to."

"I do not know anything about her. I have been here two months, and I have never heard of her."

"She lived on the second floor, to the left."

"A Roumanian gentleman lives in that flat now."

"But don't you know . . .?"

"I am afraid I do not know anything about her."

"Perhaps the present tenant, the Roumanian gentleman, would know. . . ."

"That is impossible. He has been here only a month. When I first came, the flat you are talking about was empty."

I did not know what more to say to her. Yet I could not make up my mind to go. She decided things for me at length by shutting the door in my face. I went out again into the pouring rain.

* * *

I HAVE NEVER known which to choose of the various possible hypotheses on the disappearance of Libussa Bohacek. They range from the most simple to the most wildly fantastic.

I know that I left Prague the selfsame day, and gave up medicine as a profession. I know that for a long time I suffered from hideous obsessions, while I traveled from town to town and changed my profession and manner of living. But I never told a human soul of my doubts and fears. It was only after several years had passed that I became normally calm again. Yet still today, sometimes at long intervals, the dreadful memory of that adventure returns to me. This is the first time that I have revealed its story. Perhaps I am hoping that I shall free myself of the obsession by confessing it publicly.

In the case of anyone disbelieving this tale, I may mention while I am about it that I still have in my possession the four brass knobs, and that I am prepared to show them to anyone who cares to call.

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The Vendetta

By W. PETT RIDGE

Drawings by Helen Disbrow

"I'D GO MYSELF," said the mother, "only that it would mean putting on my outdoor boots. But I can trust you, Muriel."

"I'll make their hair curl," declared Muriel with relish. "I'll talk to them like a Dutch uncle. I'll make 'em stare with both eyes. I won't let 'em get in a word edgeways."

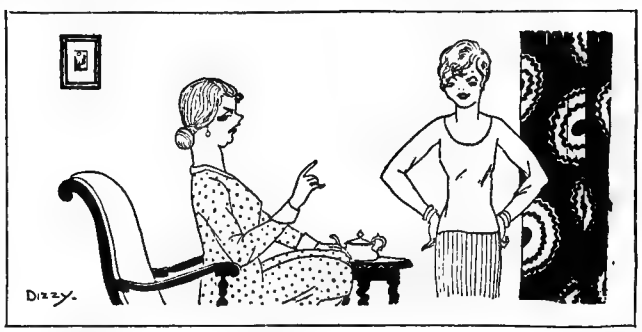
"That's right."

"I shall begin talking the moment the door's opened, and I shall keep straight on without stopping. I'm pretty good at it," remarked the girl modestly, "once I get started."

"Practice won't do you no harm. It's not a gift that you're born with, remember. As a baby you never said a word until you were close on two—a year and ten months it was, to be exact. You stumbled over the cat, and you used an expression that you must have got from your father. Now, don't say anything for a bit. Just let me think it all out, so that I can give you your instructions. Try not to be idle in the meantime; set to and light a candle."

The mother's lips moved silently; her forehead contracted in the effort of invention and careful rehearsal. Once or twice her daughter endeavoured to make suggestions, but to these she would not listen; holding up a hand as a danger signal, and a warning to stop.

Presently she appeared to have found inspiration, and, rising from the rocking-chair with a stern reproof to rheumatism, she walked up and down the small room. She began to gesticulate. Her daughter cleared the table, clattering the cups and saucers impatiently, and announcing her intention of deferring the formality of washing up until the morning; this on the ground that too many subjects should not be crowded on the brain at one and the same time, lest lunacy ensue.



"You turn out of the main road," said the mother, speaking deliberately, "and you walk down on the right-hand pavement—the right-hand—until you come to 26. Now, Muriel, do mind how you knock at the door. Don't overdo it, don't underdo it. Not a single knock; not a long rat-tat; try to manage something betwixt and between. When she opens, you say (pretending to be quite civil), 'Pardon me, but does Mrs. Watson by any chance 'appen to be in?' Let's hear you say it."

"'Excuse me, but is Mrs. Watson at home?'"

"You're not paying attention. Listen to what I'm saying, and how I say it, and say it after me." Her daughter obeyed.

"And she'll answer, 'I am Mrs. Watson.' And you'll say, 'Oh really; can I speak to you for a few moments?' That takes you into the passage. Close the front door after you, but don't close it right to; because when you've finished you'll want to skip off sharp without letting her have a chance to say anything back. See?"

"Rather!"

"'Mrs. Watson!' you'll go on, 'Mrs. Watson, my mother asked me to call and see you about one or two small matters.' You can say all this quietly, because until she knows who you are—understand what I mean?—she'll be so pleasant in her manner that you'd think butter wouldn't melt in her mouth. She won't recognize you, Muriel; the two families haven't been on speaking terms since you was in short frocks and her boy was in a knickerbocker suit and a sailor hat. But the moment you tell her who you are, then you've got to begin. Mustn't lose a moment then."

"I shall start by asking her——"

The girl found herself ordered to dismiss at once the idea that she need give to her parent any sort of help in composition of this delicate matter; all that she had to do was to listen and to learn, and to refrain, if she could, from irrelevant interruption. The mother had often wished the girl might grow up with a due and proper respect for her elders: the prayer, apparently, had miscarried.

"You'll put your back against the wall, and you'll say, 'Mrs. Watson, you seem to be one of those who talk without thinking of what they're talking about, either that or else you're a malicious low-minded woman and you can take your choice which you've been passing remarks about our family on the strength of having been allowed to know us for a short period of time years ago before we found out the kind of person you were and those remarks, Mrs. Watson, have come back to us and you probably never thought that your tittle-tattling would travel so far but it has and it's all been repeated to us word for word the same as you uttered it and you've been raking up old grievances, Mrs. Watson, and you've been saying things

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that have got no more truth in them than—than—' " She stopped for breath and for a phrase.

"Nothing at all."

"Let's think of something better than that."

"No more truth in them than you've got sense in your head."

"Not bad," admitted the mother.

"No more truth in them than you've got a right to making such remarks."

"That's not so good. But the great thing, Muriel, will be to keep right on, and not allow her to stop you. 'Mrs. Watson,' you can say, 'my mother has seen a solicitor about it.' " The girl gave signs of astonishment; the mother declared there could be no harm in making any statement, the exactitude of which could not be disproved. " 'Seen a solicitor and he strongly advises her to make a law case of it but my mother says that if she gets damages she'll be no better off because you never made a habit of paying what you owed and she supposes that you're too old to begin now, but mother does think that when a person like yourself gets to forty-five'—that'll touch her up, because she's only just over forty, as a matter of fact—'gets to forty-five she ought to try to live a peaceable life and make friendships instead of breaking them, and mother says she's got her own opinion about you and if *she* liked she could talk and tell a thing or two but thank Heaven she's got too much pride in herself to do anything of the kind only if this happens again, she promises you that she'll take action.' "

"Shall I tell her what sort, mother?"

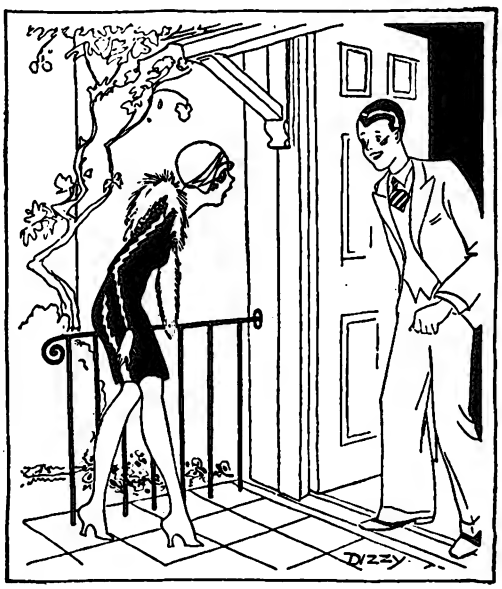
"You'll tell her just what I've told you, miss. No more and no less. Now let's hear what you're going to say."

Prompting and some amendments and many corrections were given, the girl preparing herself the while for outdoor promenade and deliberating on the question of head-gear; decision come to that Sunday apparel should be worn for the more perfect abasement of the Watson family. The denunciatory speech became strengthened here and there and its points sharpened; the girl was recalled at the last moment because a new reading of the part had occurred to the mother—a reading in which the voice was not raised, but all the barbed sentences delivered in quiet, ordinary tones, and with a pitying smile. Several expressions of face had to be tried ere the right and exactly correct was selected; the girl went off wearing this carefully, and repeating the opening phrases to herself.

"If you *can* manage to hint," said the mother, at the doorway, "that we've found out something about her at the time before she was married, by all means do so."

She made an attempt to engage in domestic work, but, anxiety intervening, she gave this up, and sitting down, rocked gently to and fro, watching the clock and beaming contentedly. Apparently she was reconstituting the scene at the Watsons', and deriving therefrom a considerable amount of calm enjoyment. When the time came for the girl to return, the mother went to the front door. She waited there for a full half-hour ere she perceived Muriel turning the corner; the girl waved a hand to some one in the main road.

"Now set down," ordered the mother, trembling with anticipation and eagerness, "set down and tell us all about it."



"Glad I wore my best hat."

"Never dreamed of letting you go in any other. How did she take it all?"

"And thank goodness I'd got gloves on."

"Begin at the beginning. You knocked at the door?"

"Knocked at the door," said Muriel dreamily, "and he opened it. He opened it. And oh, mother, he has grown up such a nice-looking young chap, with the straightest nose——'

"I wish now," interrupted the mother crossly, "I wish to goodness now that I'd taken the trouble to put me boots on and go myself."

Spanish Folk Song

LET the rich man fill his belly;
Let him fast that has no bread;
And he may sleep in the moonlight
That cannot find a bed.

If the sea were one great ink-pot
And the sky of paper made,
The evil that's in women
Could not all be said.

If the sea were one great ink-pot
And of paper all the sky,
It were not enough for telling
How deeply men can lie.

To love with no return
Is a sad thing to befall;
But a sadder, to come to die
Before having loved at all.

Translated by Havelock Ellis.

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Georg Brandes to Jonas Lie

Letters Translated by JULIUS MORITZEN

A BRILLIANT CRITIC and historian of nineteenth century letters whose position was unrivaled and largely unrewarded; a tempestuous man whose life was filled with controversies and disappointments—this was Georg Brandes. Brandes was far more than a critic, writes Professor Fife of Columbia University in the introduction to Mr. Julius Moritzen's book on Brandes. "He [Brandes] has drawn together in himself all the streams of culture of the later nineteenth and early twentieth century as expressed in European letters and esthetics. He has not consciously created an esthetic or philosophical system. He has, however, fused together the million fragments of European culture and thrown over them the light of his own bright realism. What he has wrought and represents is not a brilliant mosaic of ideas, but a genuinely unique picture of the best in European culture during two and a half generations."

Georg Brandes was born in Copenhagen in 1842, and died there on February 19, 1927. After studying law, philosophy, and esthetics at Copenhagen University, he left in 1864 to travel, and to begin his career as radical, thinker, writer, and teacher. By 1866 he was engaged in the first of the many controversies with which his independence of thought surrounded him. This was the result of his first book of creative criticism, *Dualism in Our Recent Philosophy*. He was not long in stirring up further excitement. Returning from France steeped in Taine's realistic philosophy, he began a series of sensational lectures at Copenhagen University—the first studies for his epochal *Main Currents in Nineteenth Century Literature*. With the appearance of this work, Brandes' position as the most important critic in the north of Europe was recognized. But he was a Jew; he had supported many radical causes (such as the freedom of women); he was suspected of Atheism. These were unforgivable crimes in the Denmark of that day. When the chair of Esthetics at the University became vacant, Brandes was not asked to fill it. Hurt and angry, he shortly after went into voluntary exile in Germany. But here his anti-Prussian ideas of liberty offended, and five years later, in 1883, he returned to his native city. Then followed a few happier years. A new school of writers and thinkers had sprung up who were anxious to acknowledge him as their leader. But by 1885 a reaction against him set in, and he was not finally recognized for many years.

Courtesy The New York Times

Georg Brandes
Drawing by S. J. Woolf

His recognition abroad was far greater than at home, which was a constant source of sorrow to him. In America, however, he was little known. Writing to Mr. Moritzen in 1923, after his position was established, he said: "The sale of my books in America has been slight. My royalties this year amount to 5 shillings 9 pence, which can hardly be called wealth."

The following letters which Brandes wrote to the great Norwegian writer, Jonas Lie, have never before been published in English. Brandes had for many years cherished a deep admiration for Lie's writings. But in 1870, when Brandes asked Lie to join him in editing *The Nineteenth Century* and Lie refused, the growing acquaintance was abruptly broken off. It was not until 1883 and the publication of Lie's *Slave of Life*, that Brandes' admiration overcame his resentment, and the friendship was resumed. These letters are a record not only of an interesting friendship between two of the most important men in Scandinavian literature, but they present a vivid picture of Brandes' bitterness and his volcanic personality.

Copenhagen, November 27, 1884.

MR. JONAS LIE:

My heartfelt thanks for your kind lines. You are personally acquainted with Strindberg, and therefore you know better than I all that he has written. The article I wrote, however, I consider both well-meaning and appreciative. It is only his theory that I describe as unfruitful, for it seems to me contradictory. If I had felt that the situation was really serious—that anyone would have looked upon it as tragic—I should probably have written differently.

To me there is something droll, something humorous, in the fact that he has become famous on account of a casual, flippant statement about the "Last Supper," when all his meritorious work has merely made him known. In the same way my younger brother became

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notorious throughout half of Europe because he declared that he did not believe in the God of the Bible, and at the same time his other writings were hardly known outside of Copenhagen.

Strindberg, who can command the highest price of any writer in Sweden, and who is the recipient of all kinds of homage, including laurel wreaths with red ribbons and bows, etc., certainly is not an object for sympathy.

But enough of this. What I am anxious to do is to thank you for the personal inference in your letter, and to tell you how glad I am that your former prejudice against me is gone. I remember that some years ago you informed me through Hegel (a Danish publisher) that you represented "your country's simplicity" while I represented "Europe's multiplicity," and that between us all collaboration would be impossible.

I flatter myself to think that since that time you have come to realize that I am more simple than you thought. In return, permit me to say that I am thoroughly thankful for all that I have learned from you.

Your first book, *The Visionary,* I read during a prolonged sickness in Rome in 1870, but although the book attracted me greatly, I lost sight of you. My own existence was so taxing and restless that I read only those Scandinavian writers with whom I was personally acquainted. But your latest efforts exceed my expectations. *The Family on Gilje* is a splendid work.

Trusting that our paths may cross soon again, I am, Respectfully yours,

GEORG BRANDES.

✕

Copenhagen, August 29, 1887.

DEAR MR. LIE:

Of course, I did not know that the old and intimate relationship no longer existed between you and Bj. [Björnstjerne Björnson, noted Norwegian author]. Had I known this, I should certainly not have troubled you. . . . Please accept my thanks, and if I can ever serve you in any way do not pass by my door. I should most certainly like to see you soon. I would appreciate your opinion of many things. The few of us who live for intellectual ideas and have worthwhile thoughts to exchange with others ought, like the best French authors twenty years ago, to meet twice a month at dinner to break a lance with each other. Through isolation several become, like Ibsen, for instance, almost unable to engage in conversation. Others, again, like Björnson, so conceited and talkative that they tolerate no opinions but their own. All suffer from the need of congenial intercourse. I myself literally don't know where to go when I leave my house. I exist only when I am traveling.

I wish you success with my whole heart in the work on which you are at present engaged. You gave us all great pleasure with *The Daughters of the Commodore.*

If you will allow me a slight criticism, then it is this: I find it a little improbable that the young people meet only once and that this circumstance immediately leads to such consequences.

What I like about you as a man is that in contrast to the younger Norwegian authors, who as soon as things come their way become important in their own eyes—even in Garborg there was evident an incredible change between two visits—you act as if you had never had success with a single book. I believe, or rather I know, that even the greatest masters have been that unassuming. I know, for instance, that no one was more artless than was Shakespeare. So also with Turgeniev and with Stuart Mill.

May I also ask you to give my best respects to your wife, of whom all speak in such admiring terms.

Sincerely yours,

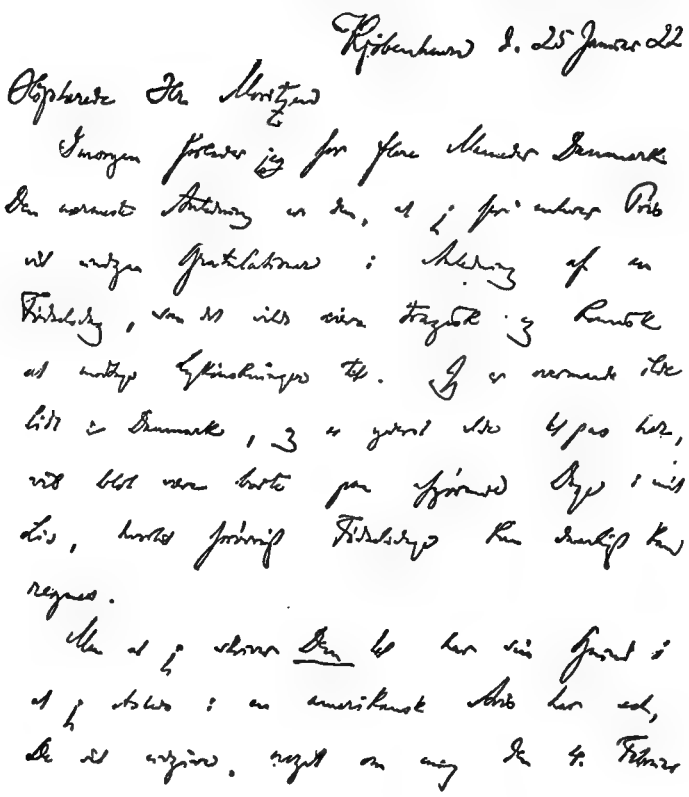
GEORG BRANDES.

✕

Copenhagen, St. Anna Square, 24,
September 4, 1887.

DEAR MR. LIE:

This evening both of your letters arrived at one time. Many thanks for the kind expressions. As for that matter with Björnson, things are not proceeding as well as I had hoped. He is as deaf to all reason as he is loud-speaking. No later than yesterday I received a most difficult letter from him, in which he not only lets stand all his abusive words, uttered publicly,



Copenhagen, January 25, 1922.

Most Respected Mr. Moritzen:

Tomorrow I shall leave Denmark, to be gone several months. One of the main reasons is that I wish to avoid at any cost congratulations on the occasion of a birthday that it would be both tragic and comical to accept. I am greatly disliked in Denmark, and I feel most uncomfortable here. I want to be away from here on important days in my life, in which, however, birthdays certainly are to be included.

My reason for writing you is that I have read in an American newspaper that you are about to publish something about me on

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without taking them back, but repeats in *Politiken* what he formerly said about "my unbelievable meanness," an expression that he seems to gloat over as if it were a triumphant sentence. . . .

You are right; our opinions are frequently a very small and unimportant part of our characters—the label on the bottle, not the contents. The worst of it is, with such terms as Conservative, Liberal, Radical, free love, and such, that blockheads, and sometimes people who are not fools, take them so seriously.

It seems to me that Paris must be a fine place for a writer. You live in peace, away from the daily prating at home. At the present time everything in Norway is in confusion. Disappointment followed quickly after victory. How little one experiences in life but what disappoints! As the years go on, hope grows less and less, but one also becomes less exacting and more grateful. Sincerely yours,

GEORG BRANDES.

January 2, 1888.

DEAR MR. LIE:

You are mistaken as regards your surmise, but the mistake is quite unimportant. My brother is the author of the review ("Companionship"), but I would with pleasure have written it. I take the opportunity to thank you for the fine book. From what I see in the papers, I feel that you will derive much pleasure from what you wrote.

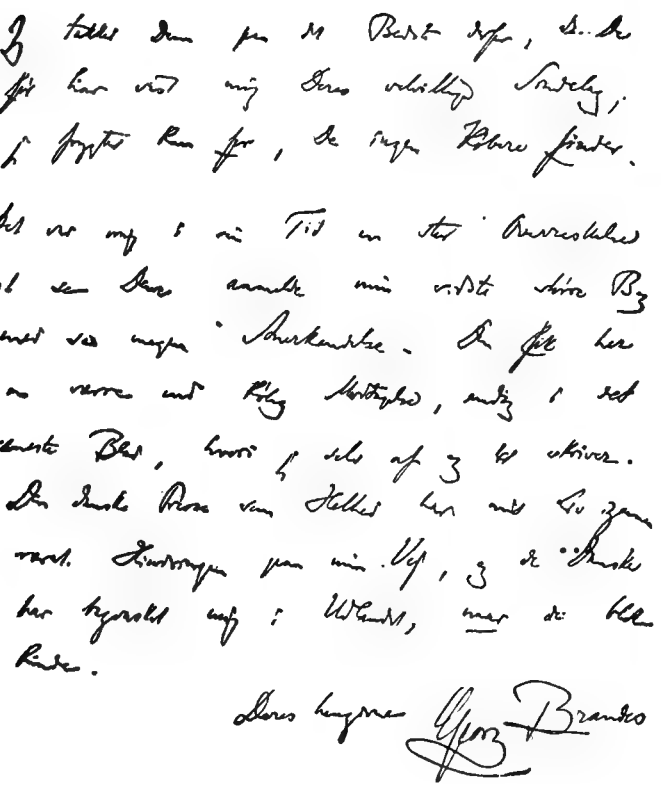
Strindberg is here, and I have recently made his acquaintance. I value in the highest degree the man's talent. How unfortunate that an unhappy marriage of the most peculiar kind makes this great genius almost a monomaniac. He feels, apparently, a physical attraction of the most intense kind, at the same time that intellectual abhorrence possesses him. He belongs to the small group of unaccountables. But he is a genial personality withal.

Geijerstamm, who has been here, is a fine fellow, but his talent is only middling, and then he is so disliked in this miserable, hypocritical Sweden. It is terrible with this morality. It is the bridge by which the few who for a short time have been so careless as to think liberally return to be friendly with the clericals. And up there they use this wretchedness for the purpose of crushing aspiring young literature.

Just think, when a Danish publisher wished to bring out Strindberg, the Swedes would not even distribute the books on commission, so he gave it up. Anything more miserable than this Scandinavianism . . . well, I won't say anything more. I don't want to write in a mood of anger. My best thanks to you for your friendship in the old year, and I wish you success and happiness in the new.

Sincerely yours,

GEORG BRANDES.



the fourth day of February. I thank you most sincerely for this and the good-will shown me on several occasions. I only fear that you will not find many purchasers.

It was to me quite a surprise to see you review my last big work with such understanding. Here it received a rather cool reception, even in the only paper in which I write now and then. The Danish press has on the whole been a hindrance to me, and the Danes abroad have only talked behind my back whenever they could do so.

Yours sincerely,

GEORG BRANDES.

Copenhagen, December 2, 1889.

DEAR MR. LIE:

This ugly city, Copenhagen, that you think entirely too well of because you don't know it, tasted badly after Paris. For a while I felt much depressed and had recourse to my work, which had piled up during my absence. I am now in the midst of my wonted task of preparing lectures, and have also published a volume of essays, which I take the liberty of sending you. And now my daily routine is, as ever, drab. Without wishing to expose my melancholy, I send you my best thanks for all that heartfelt goodness shown me during my stay in the dear city around the Arc de Triomphe.

Yesterday I read a long tirade against me in *Verdens Gang* (*The Way of the World*) by Fru L. Kieler, whose name I have never mentioned, but who has hated me for a number of years. *Verdens Gang*, in which I had confidence, has published these abusive things about me without the least cause and for the second time, and I am through with this paper. I have been patient, but this is more than enough.

Dear Mr. Lie! What cosy, home-like dinners and evenings with you there in Paris. There is peace and life at one and the same time. Here in Copenhagen we have neither. We live under a most unjust *régime*, among a wholly demoralized people. As for me personally, I exist in an atmosphere of hatred against me, extraordinary indifference to my efforts, and soulless curiosity

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that makes people rush madly to my lectures in crowds and fight like furies to get a seat, while a couple of days later they have forgotten everything I said, and, furthermore, never understood half of it. Yours,

GEORG BRANDES.

January 8, 1890.

MY DEAREST MR. LIE:

If this letter comes late and if I only today send you my New Year's greetings, then it is due to the fact that fate has been so hard on me that I am almost as one paralyzed. My little daughter has died after an illness of only four days—my youngest child Astrid, going on eleven years. The terror of this recent time surpasses anything ever experienced by me. I have been compelled to consign the sweetest little girl to the grave after she died in my arms. The loss in our home is unendurable. There is left us now only one child—and this constant fear for her. I have moved away in all haste, and now reside in Harbour Street, No. 55, but my name on a letter is quite sufficient for an address. My home is now so sad that work for the present is wholly out of the question.

However, I must thank you for your letter, and tell you with what pleasure and admiration I read your fine book, *Evil Powers*. To me it appears to belong to the very best that you have ever written. Both Kielland and I enjoyed discussing it the other evening, and I find Johnston and the Director most admirably drawn. Somehow, I seem to glimpse you and B. B. in these characters. The presentation, the art of the story-telling, is indeed extraordinary as you have managed it. If you will permit a critic a little comment, I find that the main thought might have gained if the jealous nature of Gjertrud had been emphasized a trifle more. Then we would have found the envy of the father reproduced more directly in the daughter's jealousy. The young artist is, perhaps, a little too nice in manners. But since you have put the greatest weight on the old couple, the others matter very little. All your friends have witnessed with the greatest satisfaction one more of your literary victories.

Finally, I thank you for your kind words about my book. I spent the summer rewriting it in German, and then the publisher cheated me out of what was coming to me, so that I had to sue him. I have had very hard luck, since the original did not sell at all. As for the *Rundschau,* I have very little influence there, and they have returned my contributions. When one's reputation is being constantly undermined, and upheld by no one, then one loses ground. Here the annoying appeal (about State support) has only been the cause for an insane outburst of hatred against me, the one attack more idiotic than the other.

Dear Mr. Lie, give my best regards to your wife and children, and with my best wishes to you for a good New Year and continued success with your work, I am,

Sincerely yours,

GEORG BRANDES.

Copenhagen, December 29, 1886.

DEAR JONAS LIE, of all men the most lovable, hospitable, and open-handed, accept my thanks for the old year and my best wishes for the new. You make me a present of a book that you have written; your son Erik mentions me in the heartiest way in the students' publication, and writes me most interestingly and humorously about what transpires in the outside world. As for myself, I am as silent as a fish, so both of you can condemn my ingratitude and silence. The fact is that life is almost too much for me at present. My lectures take up so much time and energy that frequently I can give myself only from two to three hours' sleep a night. When in addition there arrive daily from twenty to thirty letters, and books without number, then a poor mortal almost gives up in despair.

I am now and as ever your most faithful and grateful vassal,

GEORG BRANDES.

Copenhagen, July 7, 1905.

MY DEAR FRIEND:

Your letter reaches me as I am preparing to leave for Carlsbad, where I shall remain some three weeks for the sake of my health. My sincerest thanks for your warm-hearted letter. But I ask of you, do not feel sad because your sight becomes less good with the advance of years. Do not speak of blindness! Can a blind man write a letter? And your dear wife will safeguard your eyes and read to you.

I should like to have deserved your praise for the autobiography, but I stopped right in the midst of it because I felt that my life in those earlier years was all too common and empty. However, I shall publish it at Christmas as a book.

What do we not experience! I am thinking less of the bloodless events in Norway than of the terrors that are taking place in Russia. I am in constant touch with that country, and it is with mixed joy and sorrow that I notice how slowly matters progress there, what terrible obstacles still are in the way, and how far it still is before the good cause can win.

I greet both of you most heartily. Yours,

GEORG BRANDES.

[*Jonas Lie died in 1908. Brandes, who received the news at Lago Maggiore, Italy, wrote his son, Erik Lie, the following letter.*]

July 9, 1908.

MR. ERIK LIE:

Far distant from the North I received the sad message about your father's death. Permit me only to express my deepest sympathy for you and yours, and to say how true it is that I loved both your father and your mother. Few persons in this world have shown me greater affection, and I owe none more thanks for heartfelt hospitality. Never will I forget the fall of 1889, when I was in Paris, where your parents again and again invited me to their home, so that I came to feel as if it were my own. And with each visit to Paris our friendship only became the more firm.

Throughout the whole of Scandinavia the name of Jonas Lie will today be praised and honoured.

Your most sincere

GEORG BRANDES.

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A Letter from the eminent Dramatist BROWN
to the eminent Novelist SNOOKS

A Plan *for a* Prize Novel

By W. M. THACKERAY

MY DEAR SNOOKS: I am on the look-out here for materials for original comedies such as those lately produced at your theatre; and in the course of my studies, I have found something, my dear Snooks, which I think will suit your book. You are bringing, I see, your admirable novel, *The Mysteries of Mayfair,* to an end—(by the way, the scene, in the 200th number, between the Duke, his Grandmother, and the Jesuit Butler, is one of the most harrowing and exciting I ever read)—and, of course, you must turn your real genius to some other channel; and we may expect that your pen shall not be idle. . . .

Unless he writes with a purpose, you know, a novelist in our days is good for nothing. This one writes with a socialist purpose; that with a conservative purpose: this author or authoress with the most delicate skill insinuates Catholicism into you, and you find yourself all but a Papist in the third volume: another doctors you with Low-Church remedies to work inwardly upon you, and which you swallow down unsuspiciously, as children do calomel in jelly. Fiction advocates all sorts of truth and causes—doesn't the delightful bard of the Minories find Moses in everything? M. Gonzales's plan, and the one which I recommend to my dear Snooks, simply was to write an advertisement novel. Look over the *Times* or the "Directory," walk down Regent Street or Fleet Street any day—see what houses advertise most, and put yourself into communication with their proprietors. With your rings, your chains, your studs, and the tip on your chin, I don't know any greater swell than Bob Snooks. Walk into the shops, I say, ask for the principal, and introduce yourself, saying, "I am the great Snooks; I am the author of the *Mysteries of Mayfair;* my weekly sale is 281,000; I am about to produce a new work called *The Palaces of Pimlico, or the Curse of the Court,* describing and lashing fearlessly the vices of the aristocracy: this book will have a sale of at least 530,000; it will be on every table—in the boudoir of the pampered duke, as in the chamber of the honest artisan. The myriads of foreigners who are coming to London, and are anxious to know about our national manners, will purchase my book, and carry it to their distant homes. So, Mr. Tailor, or Mr. Haberdasher, or Mr. Jeweler, how much will you stand if I recommend you in my forthcoming novel?" You may make a noble income in this way, Snooks.

For instance, suppose it is an upholsterer. What more easy, what more delightful, than the description of upholstery? As thus:—

"Lady Emily was reclining on one of Down and Eider's voluptuous ottomans, the only couch on which Belgravian beauty now reposes, when Lord Bathershins entered, stepping noiselessly over one of Tompkins's elastic Axminster carpets. 'Good heavens, my Lord!' she said—and the lovely creature fainted. The Earl rushed to the mantelpiece, where he saw a *flacon* of Otto's eau-de-cologne, and," &c. . . .

Then you might have a touch at the wine-merchant and purveyor. "'Where did you get this delicious claret, or *pâté de foie gras?*' (or what you please), said Count Blagowski to the gay young Sir Horace Swellmore. The voluptuous Bart. answered, 'At So-and-So's, or So-and-So's.'" The answer is obvious. You may furnish your cellar or your larder in this way. Begad, I lick my lips at the very idea!

Then, as to tailors, milliners, bootmakers, &c., how easy to get a word for them! "Amramson, the tailor, waited upon Lord Paddington with an assortment of his unrivaled waistcoats, or clad in that simple but aristocratic style of which Schneider *alone* has the secret. Parvy Newcome really looked like a gentleman, and though corpulent and crooked, Schneider had managed to give him," &c. Don't you see what a stroke of business you might do in this way?

The shoemaker.—"Lady Fanny flew, rather than danced, across the ballroom; only a Sylphide, or Taglioni, or a lady *chausséed* by Chevillett of Bond Street, could move in that fairy way"; and

The hairdresser.—"'Count Barbarossa is seventy years of age,' said the Earl. 'I remember him at the Congress of Vienna, and he has not a single gray hair.' Wiggins laughed. 'My good Lord Baldock,' said the old wag, 'I saw Barbarossa's hair coming out of Ducroissant's shop, and under his valet's arm—ho! ho! ho!'—and the two *bon-vivants* chuckled as the Count passed by talking with," &c., &c.

The gunmaker.—"The antagonists faced each other; and undismayed before his gigantic enemy, Kilconnel raised his pistol. It was one of Clicker's manufacture, and Sir Marmaduke knew he could trust the maker and the weapon. 'One, two, *three,*' cried O'Tool, and the two pistols went off at that instant, and uttering a terrific curse, the Lifeguardsman," &c. —A sentence of this nature from your pen, my dear Snooks, would, I should think, bring a case of pistols and a double-barrelled gun to your lodgings; and, though Heaven forbid you should use such weapons, you might sell them, you know, and we could make merry with the proceeds.

If my hint is of any use to you, it is quite at your service, dear Snooks; and should anything come of it, I hope you will remember your friend.

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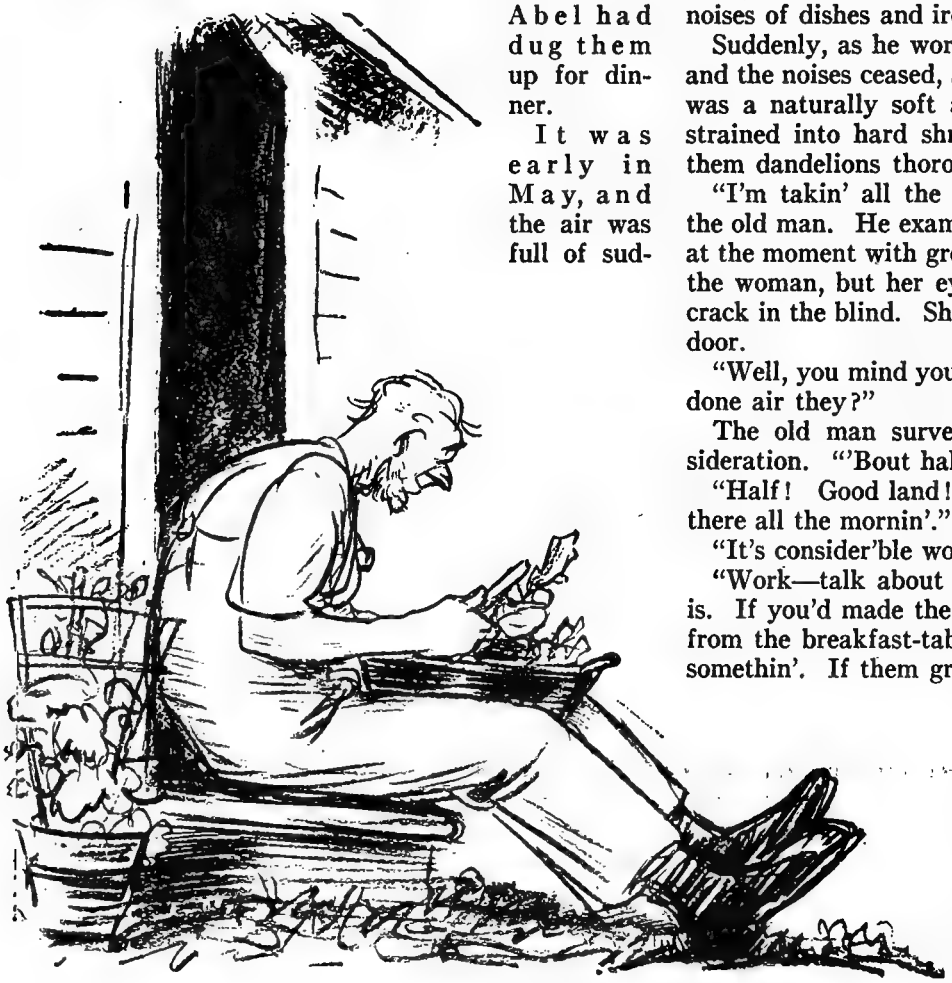
A Kitchen Colonel

Mary E. Wilkins Freeman

BACK OF THE KITCHEN proper in the Lee house there was another shed-kitchen, unplastered and unpainted, that was used for rough work like soap-boiling and washing. Each kitchen had its own door opening directly into the green yard on the north side of the house.

Abel Lee sat in the door of the back kitchen cleaning dandelion greens. His long limbs in stiff blue cotton overalls sprawled down over the low wooden step into the grass. His white head showed out against the dark unpainted interior at his back. He had a tin pan full of dandelions between his knees, and he was scraping them assiduously with an old shoe-knife, and throwing them into another pan on the step beside him.

That morning the narrow green yard that stretched along the north side of the house had been all thickly set with yellow dandelion disks; now there were very few left, for Abel had dug them up for dinner.



It was early in May, and the air was full of sudden sweet calls of birds and delicate rustles of flowering boughs. In Ephraim Cole's next-door yard, on the other side of the gray picket-fence, stood three blossoming peach-trees. They were young and symmetrical trees, they stood in a line, and were in full pink bloom. Every time they stirred in the wind they gave out a stronger almond fragrance.

Abel, as he cleaned his dandelions, breathed it in without noticing. He had been out there all the morning, and had become accustomed to it, as it seems one would to the air of paradise. Moreover, he had seen seventy-eight seasons of blooming peach-trees, and a spring had become like an old and familiar picture on his wall; it had no new meaning for him. And, too, he was harnessed, as it were, with his head down, to dandelions.

Always as he sat there he could hear a heavy creaking step in the forward kitchen. Back and forth it went, and there were also loud rattling and clinking noises of dishes and iron kettles.

Suddenly, as he worked on the dandelions, the step and the noises ceased, and a voice took their place. It was a naturally soft and weak voice that had been strained into hard shrillness. "You mind you clean them dandelions thorough, father."

"I'm takin' all the pains I can with 'em," replied the old man. He examined one which he held in hand at the moment with great solicitude. He could not see the woman, but her eyes were upon him through the crack in the blind. She was at the window nearest the door.

"Well, you mind you do," she repeated. "How near done air they?"

The old man surveyed the pans with grave consideration. "'Bout half, I guess."

"Half! Good land! An' you've been quiddlin' out there all the mornin'."

"It's consider'ble work to dig 'em, mother."

"Work—talk about work! You dunno what work is. If you'd made the pies that I have since I got up from the breakfast-table you might think you'd done somethin'. If them greens ain't done in half an hour I can't get 'em boiled for dinner."

"I guess I can git 'em done in half an hour."

"Guess—there ain't no guess about it! You've got to, if I git 'em done for dinner, an' I've got to have somethin' to eat, with all them boarders. I want you to git

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Drawings by August Henkel

By MARY E. WILKINS FREEMAN

them done, an' then wash up the breakfast dishes. I ain't had a minute. Now don't, for the land's sake, putter so long over that one; it's clean 'nough."

The voice ceased and the step began. Abel laboured with diligence at his dandelion greens. After a while another old man came stiffly sauntering across the next-door yard, and took up a stand the other side of the picket-fence. He was small, with sharp features and a high forehead. He had very white hair and a long white beard, and he was smiling to himself. He stood between two of the blooming peach-trees, and looked smilingly at Abel, who toiled over his greens, and did not appear to see him.

"Well, Abel, how air ye?" said the old man finally. His smile deepened, his old blue eyes took on a hard twinkle, like blue beads, and stared straight into Abel's face.

"Well, I'm pooty fair, Ephraim. How air you?" Abel had not started when the other spoke; he merely glanced up from his greens with a friendly air.

"Well, I'm 'bout as usual, Abel." The old man paused for a second. When he spoke again it was more cautiously. He was near Abel, and also very near the kitchen window whence the sound of footsteps and dishes came. "Kitchen colonel this mornin', Abel?" he queried, in a soft and insinuating voice. His venerable white beard seemed to take quirks and curls like a satyr's; he gave a repressed chuckle.

"I dunno what you call it," replied Abel, with a patient gravity. He took another dandelion out of the pan and examined it minutely.

"Goin' to the meetin' this arternoon?"

"What meetin'?"

"The town meetin'; ain't ye heerd of it?"

"No, I ain't."

"It's a special town meetin' 'bout the water-works they're talkin' 'bout puttin' in. There's notices up on all the trees down street. I should ha' thought you'd seen 'em, if you'd had eyes."

"Well, I ain't happened to, somehow."

Ephraim cast a glance at the kitchen window, and again cautiously lowered his voice. "Been too busy in the kitchen, ain't ye?"

"Well, I dunno 'bout that."

"I s'pose a kitchen colonel wouldn't git shot if he run for't; but he might git the pots an' kittles throwed at him." Ephraim doubled over the fence with merriment at his own humour.

Abel's face was imperturbable; he kept close at work on the greens.

"Well, I s'pose you'll go to the meetin'," continued Ephraim.

"I dunno."

"I should think you'd want to go, if you was a man, an' have a leetle voice in things. Here they air talkin' 'bout puttin' in them water-works, an' raisin' our taxes four per cent. to pay for't. I've got a good well, an' so've you, an' we don't want no water-works."

"There's some that ain't got wells," observed Abel, shortly.

"Well, that ain't anything to us, is it? We've got 'em. Anyway, I should think you'd want to go to the meetin', an' see what *was* bein' done, if you was a man."

Abel said nothing. He began to gather up himself and his pans stiffly. The dandelions were all picked over. Ephraim, still smiling, leaned on the fence and watched him.

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"What ye goin' to do now, Abel?"

Abel did not seem to hear. When he stood up, one could see how tall he was, although there was a stoop in his gaunt square shoulders. His spare face was pale, and his sharp, handsome features had a severe downward cast, although their principal effect was gentle patience. He looked like a Roman senator turned begging friar as he stood there in his overalls holding his dandelion pans.

"Got the dishes washed, Abel?"

"No, I ain't yet," replied Abel, with a mixture of embarrassment and dignity in his tone. He turned on his heel, but Ephraim would not let him go.

"Stop a minute," said he. "Where's Fanny?"

"She's gone to school."

"Hm!" Ephraim, as he sniffed, cocked his head, and rolled his eyes towards the pink top of a peach-tree, as if in a spasm of contempt. "I rayther think *if* Fanny Lee was *my* granddaughter she'd quit school-teachin', an' stay to home an' help about the house-work, an' *I'd* quit bein' kitchen colonel; I rayther think I would."

Ephraim raised his voice incautiously; a woman's head appeared in the window.

"What's that?" she inquired, sharply.

"Oh, nothin'," replied Ephraim. "I was jest talkin' to Abel, Mis' Lee." Ephraim straightened himself from his lounge over the fence, and turned about with a deprecatory swiftness; but the woman's sharp old voice followed him up like a long-lashed whip.

"Well," said she, "if you ain't got anything better to do than to stan' leanin' on the fence talkin' nothin' to my husband all the forenoon, you had better come in here an' help me. I'll give you somethin' to do." Ephraim said nothing; he was in full retreat, and had passed the line of peach-trees. "You'd better go home an' help Mis' Coles carry in the water for her washin'," the woman's voice went on. "I see her carryin' in a pail jest now, an' she was bent over 'most double." Seeing that she could get no response, she stood looking after Ephraim with a comical expression that savoured of malice and amusement. She turned around when Abel with the dandelions shuffled into the room. "Now, father, what air you bringin' that pan that you've put the scrapin's of the greens in, in here for? Don't you know no better? I should think you'd knowed enough to took 'em down to the hens, many times as I've told ye. They're shut up now, an' they like green things."

"I'll take 'em down now."

"Take 'em down now! It does seem sometimes, father, as if you didn't have no sense at all. If I set you to doin' a piece of work, you're always takin' hold on't wrong end first. Take them greens down to the hens! I should think you'd know better, father."

Mrs. Lee was a small and frail-looking old woman, but she seemed always to have through her a strong quiver as of electric wires. It was as if she had an electric battery at the centre of her nervous system. Abel stood droopingly before her, his face full of mild dejection and bewilderment.

"Ain't I told you, father," she went on, "that them dandelion greens wouldn't get done for dinner if they wa'n't on? an' ain't they got to be washed? You know you ain't washed 'em, an' they ain't ready to put in the kittle, an' here you air talkin' 'bout goin' to the hen-coop! I ruther guess the hens can wait."

"I didn't know jest what you meant, mother."

"You don't act as if you knew what anything meant sometimes. It does seem to me as if you might have a leetle more sconce, father, with all I've got to do."

Abel set the pan of greens in the sink, and pumped water on them with vigour.

"Mind you git 'em clean," charged his wife. She was baking pies, and she moved about with such quickness that her motions seemed full of vibrations, and as if one could hear a hum, as with a bird. If she had about her any of the rustiness and clumsiness of age, she propelled herself with such energy that no hitches nor squeaks were apparent. She stepped heavily for so small a woman; it seemed impossible that her bodily weight could account for such heavy footsteps, and as if her character must add its own gravity to them. Mrs. Lee was but two years younger than her husband; but her light hair had not turned gray—it had only faded—and she did not wear a cap. She had been a very pretty woman, and there was still a suggestion of the prettiness in her face. She had withered complete, as some flowers do on their stalks, keeping all their original shapes, and fading into themselves, not scattering any of their graces abroad.

EVERYBODY called Mrs. Abel Lee a very smart woman, and a very wonderful woman for one of her age. The house in which she lived had been left to her by her father. Abel had mortgaged it heavily, and she had taken boarders and nearly cleared it. Abel Lee had been a very unfortunate and unsuccessful man through his whole life. He had worked hard, and failed in everything that he had undertaken. Now he was an old man of seventy-eight, and his wife was taking boarders to support the family and clear the mortgage, and he was helping her about the house work. It seemed to be all that he could do.

The Lees had had one son, who had apparently inherited his father's ill-fortune. He had a sad life, and died without a dollar, leaving his daughter Fanny to the care of his old parents. Fanny was about eighteen now, and she taught school. Her school-house was a mile away, and she did not come home to dinner. However, Mrs. Lee's boarders all came, punctually at twelve o'clock. The boarders were four women, not very young, who worked in the shoe factory. When they got home, dingy and dull-faced, they always found dinner on the table—plenty of good food. Mrs. Lee was a splendid cook, after the village model. She did the helping with alacrity, and Abel had his portion after the boarders. He had a small allowance of greens today; they were the first of the season, and the boarders were hungry for them. The four women could not grasp many of the pleasures of life, and had to make the most of those that hung low enough for them. They took a deal of comfort in eating.

After dinner Abel hurried to clear off the table and wash the dishes. He was usually a long time about it, for he was hopelessly clumsy, although he was so faithful at such work. Abel at the dish-tub with one of his wife's aprons pinned around his waist was a piteous

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object. He bent to the task with a hopeless and dejected air, and mopped the plates with melancholy fussiness. But today he rattled the dishes quite like a woman. "Don't you rattle them plates round so; you'll nick 'em," his wife remarked once, and Abel obediently tempered his movements. Still, the dinner dishes were washed much sooner than usual. After they were set away, Abel took up a stand at the pantry door; he leaned against it, and regarded his wife with a hesitating air. Once in a while he opened his mouth as if to speak, then seemed to change his mind. Finally Mrs. Lee turned sharply on him. "Why don't you git the broom an' sweep up the kitchen, father," said she. "What air you standin' there for?"

Abel did not answer for a moment; he looked across the room at the broom on its nail, then at his wife—"I kinder thought—mebbe—I'd go to—that town meetin' this afternoon."

His wife faced about on him with a spoon in her hand. "What town meetin'?"

"The one they've 'p'inted about the water-works. I thought mebbe I'd better go an' kinder look into it a leetle."

"Look into it—a great difference it'll make, your lookin' into it! I should think you'd got about all the town meetin' you could attend to to home, without goin' traipsin' off there. Here's the churnin' to be done, an' I ain't got no time nor strength for't. I shouldn't think you'd talk 'bout town meetin's, father."

"Well, I dunno as I'd better go," said Abel, and went across for the broom. However, he swept with more despatch than usual, and when he sat down to the churn it was with a forlorn hope that the butter might come in season for him to go to the town meeting. But the butter did not come until the meeting had long been dispersed, and not until Fanny came home from school. Abel was just lifting out the dasher when she appeared in the kitchen door with her dinner basket on her arm. "Well, grandpa, has the butter come?" said she.

"I guess you've brought it; it's been all the afternoon gittin' here." Abel surveyed her with adoration. Fanny was a pretty young girl. She looked at her grandparents and smiled radiantly, but evidently the smiles were about something that they did not understand.

"What air you lookin' so awful tickled about?" asked Mrs. Lee.

"Oh, nothing. Did you have any pudding left from dinner? I'm most starved."

"There's a saucer under the yellow bowl on the pantry shelf."

Fanny was still smiling when she sat down at the kitchen table with the pudding. "What does ail you?" Mrs. Lee asked again. She was at the other end of the table rolling out biscuits for tea.

"Oh, nothing, grandma. What makes you think there's anything?" Fanny ate her pudding with apparent unconcern, but all the time her eyes danced, and the corners of her mouth curved upward. "I didn't have to walk home tonight," she remarked, finally.

"Didn't have to walk home? Why not?"

"Well, Charley Page came along just about the time school was out, and—he brought me home in his buggy."

"Well, I never!" Mrs. Lee's sharp old face softened; she surveyed her granddaughter with admiring smiles. "That's the second time within a week, ain't it."

Fanny nodded, and bent lower over the pudding. She was blushing pink, and she could not keep the smiles back. Abel, who was starting the fire, stood stock-still, and stared with delighted wonder at her and his wife. "That young Page is one of the smartest fellers in town," he volunteered; "an' his father's wuth a good deal of property."

Abel was so pleased that he paid little attention when, on carrying his basket around to the shed door for more light wood, Ephraim again hailed him from the fence. "Hullo, Abel!" he called; "I didn't see you to the town meetin'."

"No; I wa'n't there."

"Kitchen colonel again?"

Abel picked up wood vigorously. Ephraim surveyed him with a dissatisfied expression. "Who was that I see your Fanny a-ridin' home with?" he asked.

Abel straightened himself, and looked over at Ephraim. "That was the young Page feller," he said, proudly.

"John Page's son?"

"Yes."

"H'm!"

In a moment Ephraim turned about and walked off. He had a daughter of his own who was about Fanny's age, and she was very plain-looking and unattractive, and was not liked by the young men.

Fanny was much sought for, she was so pretty, and she had such pleasant ways. She dressed nicely too; her grandmother encouraged her to spend her school money for clothes. Her grandparents had always petted her, and exacted very little from her. She did not help much about the house. Tonight, after tea, she stood looking irresolutely at her pretty gray dress and her grandparents. "Don't you want me to take off my dress and help about the dishes?" said she.

"Land, no!" answered her grandmother. "Go 'long; it ain't wuth while to change your dress for this little passel of dishes. Father's goin' to wash 'em while I'm mixin' up the bread."

"Yes, you go right along an' set down in the parlour an' git rested, Fanny," chimed in Abel. "I ain't got a thing to do but the dishes, an' they ain't wuth talkin' about." Abel shuffled cheerfully around, gathering up the dishes from the tea-table.

Fanny went into the parlour as she was bidden; she had about her a sweet docility, and she would have changed her dress and washed the dishes just as readily. Fanny would always perform all the duties that she was told to, but probably not so very many others. She had little original directive power in the matter of duties, although she had a perfect willingness and sweetness in their execution.

She sat down at a parlour window with some fancy-work, and rocked to and fro comfortably. She could look out on the front yard full of green grass, with a

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blossoming cherry-tree, and a yellow-flowering bush down near the gate. The four women boarders were in the sitting-room, but she did not think of joining them, nor they her. Fanny's grandmother always insinuated her into the parlour when the boarders were in the sitting-room. In her heart she did not consider that these four dingy-handed shop-girls were fit associates for her granddaughter.

Fanny herself had no such feeling in the matter; she would have gone into the sitting-room and fraternized with the boarders, had her grandmother wished her to do so. But they rather repulsed her, and held themselves aloof with an awkward dignity, and Fanny was timid and easily rebuffed. They were quite acute enough to understand that Mrs. Lee did not consider them proper company for her granddaughter, and they felt injured and covertly resentful. They were also righteously indignant because Fanny was so petted by her grandparents, and did not help them more. Tonight the four women in the sitting-room whispered together about Fanny; how she was sitting all dressed up in the parlour while her poor old grandparents were working in the kitchen. They thought that she ought to give up her school and stay at home and help. She was not earning much anyway, and it all went on to her back; she need not dress so fine.

While they whispered, Fanny, small and dainty, putting pretty stitches in her fancy-work, sat at the parlour window. When it was too dark for her to sew, she leaned her head against the window-casing and looked out. The yellow bush in the yard still showed out brightly in the dusk; the cherry-tree looked like a mist. Over in the east, beyond everything else, was a soft rise of shadow; that was Eagle Mountain.

It grew darker. After a while her grandmother came into the room, feeling her way. "Don't you want me to light a lamp, grandma?" asked Fanny, in a soft, absent voice.

"No; I don't want none. I'd jest as soon set down in the dark a few minutes; then I'm goin' to bed. Father's gone." The old woman fumbled into a chair at the other window. "Have you seen anything about your hat yet?" she asked Fanny, after they both had sat still a little while.

"Yes; I went into Miss Loring's on my way to school this morning."

"What you goin' to have?"

"That brown straw I've been talking about. I'm going to have it trimmed with some brown velvet and yellow daisies."

"It'll be real handsome. When you goin' to have it?"

"Next week—Friday. I've got to have it then, for I haven't a thing to wear if we go up the mountains Saturday."

The old woman's face was invisible in the dusk, but her voice took on a pleased and significant tone, and she laughed softly. "I s'pose that Page feller will be goin', won't he?"

"I don't know. He was invited." Fanny also laughed with pleased confusion. She had been climbing the mountain with young Page for the last hour in a dream, and she had worn the brown straw hat with the brown velvet and yellow daisies.

"Well, I guess he'll go, fast enough. I see his father down to the store the other day, an' he stopped an' shook hands an' asked how I was, and looked dreadful smilin' an' knowin'. I guess he's heerd how his son's been carryin' you home from school. Well, I guess he's a good, likely young feller, an' that's wuth more'n his father's money." The old woman spoke the last words of her remark in a lagging and drowsy voice. The two were silent again. Presently there came a long heavy breath from the grandmother's corner.

"Grandma!" called Fanny.

"What?" the old woman responded, faintly.

"Wake up; you're goin' to sleep."

"Well, I dunno but I be. I guess I'd better rouse up an' go to bed. I wouldn't set up much longer if I was you, Fanny."

"I ain't going to." But Fanny sat there and dreamed quite a while after her grandmother had fumbled out of the room.

That was on Thursday. It was the next day but one, Saturday, when old Ephraim Coles came to the fence and hailed Abel as he was paring potatoes at the kitchen door. "Hullo, Abel! how air ye?"

"'Bout as usual," answered Abel.

"Kitchen colonel this mornin'?"

"I dunno what you call it." Abel was cutting the specks from the potatoes with clumsy pains. He sat on the door-step with the pan between his knees. Ephraim stood watching him. He had an important look, and his smile was different from his usual one.

Presently he leaned over the fence. "Abel!" said he, in a confidential whisper.

"What?"

"Come here a minute. Want to tell ye somethin'." Abel hesitated; he peered uneasily around at the kitchen window. Then he set down the potatoes, arose, and slowly shuffled over to the fence. Ephraim reached over and caught him by the sleeve when he came near enough. "You know Maria an' me own two share in the railroad, don't ye?" he whispered. Abel nodded. "Well," continued Ephraim, "next Saturday there's a stockholder meetin' to Boston, an' Maria she don't care nothin' 'bout goin', 'cause she's goin' to have company, an' Abby she don't want to, an' so if you want to go on Maria's stock you *can*."

Abel stared at him in gentle bewilderment. "Go to Boston?"

"Of course—go to Boston for nothin'; 'twon't cost ye a cent. An' I'll stand the dinner. We'll go in somewhere an' git somethin' to eat. An' we'll go round an' see the sights. What d'ye say to't?"

Ephraim looked at Abel with the air of an emperor tendering a royal bounty. He drew himself up, put his hands in his pockets, and smiled.

Abel looked pleased and eager. "Thank ye," said he—"thank ye, Ephraim. I'd like to go fust-rate if—there ain't nothin' to hender."

"I'd like to know what there is to hender? I guess you can quit bein' kitchen colonel for one day. The meetin' comes a week from today, an' that's Saturday, an' Fanny she'll be home to help Mis' Lee."

"Yes, she will," assented Abel, thoughtfully. "Well,

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I must go an' finish them pertaters now,' an' I'll see what mother says to it, an' let ye know."

Abel pared the potatoes with greater pains than ever; he washed them faithfully, and carried them into the kitchen, and tremblingly broached the subject of the Boston trip to his wife. To his great delight it was favourably received. Mrs. Lee said she did not see any reason why he could not go. She had entirely forgotten about Fanny's mountain party.

Fanny.

All the next week old Abel was in a tremor of delight. He had long conferences with Ephraim over the fence; delightful additions to the regular program were planned; every day some new scheme was talked over. Abel had not had an outing for many years; he was like a child over this one. Still, he did not neglect his household tasks; he worked with anxious zeal, he was so afraid that his wife might see so much to be done that she would veto the plan at the last moment. He was so anxious and nervous over it that he did not say much about it at home, for fear of having some damper cast upon him. Abel had not much shrewdness, but he had learned that a casual acceptance of a situation was much more likely than an eager one to make it lasting when his wife was concerned. Friday night at sunset both of the old men stood out in the yard with uplifted faces and scrutinized the heavens.

"It ain't goin' to be foul weather tomorrow," said Ephraim, judicially; "not if I know anything about signs."

"Ain't you afraid the wind ain't in jest the right quarter?" Abel asked, anxiously.

"H'm! I don't care nothin' about the wind. Everything p'ints square to fair weather, 'cordin' to my reck'nin'."

Ephraim was right. The next day was beautiful. Abel looked out of the window in the morning, and his face was like a boy's. Directly after breakfast he shaved himself at the kitchen glass and blacked his boots. Then he went into his bedroom to put on his Sunday clothes.

He was nearly ready—clean collar and best stock and all—when he heard Fanny's voice and Ephraim's daughter Abby's out in the yard. He did not pay much attention at first; then he stood still and listened with a lengthening face. "No, I can't go any way in the world," Fanny was saying. Her voice was perfectly sweet and uncomplaining, but there was a sad inflection in it. "Grandma forgot all about it, and she says poor grandpa has been counting on going to Boston with your father for a whole week, and it would be real cruel to keep him at home; and it's baking-day, and she's got the sitting-room carpet to put down, and she can't get along alone. Of course, I'm kind of sorry about it. I'd been counting on going; but I wouldn't keep grandpa at home for anything, and there isn't anything else for me to do but to stay myself."

"Well, I hope that pretty Rogers girl that's visiting up to Rhoda Emerson's won't cut you out with Charley Page. I saw him talking to her in the post-office last night," Abby said. Her voice was like her father's.

Abel unwound his stock, and painfully unbuttoned his stiff collar. Presently he appeared in the kitchen, and he had on his old clothes. His wife faced around on him. "For mercy's sake, father, ain't you changed your clothes yet?"

"I ain't goin', after all, I guess."

"Ain't goin'! why not?"

Fanny was standing at the sink washing dishes, and she stopped and stared.

"Well," said Abel, "I've been thinkin' on't over, an' I've made up my mind I'd better not go, on several 'counts."

"I'd like to know what."

"Well, one thing is, it's kinder cheatin'. I've got to go as Maria Coles, an' I ain't Maria Coles. That's what it says in the stiffikit. I've got to show the conductor 'Maria Coles.' An' it ain't square, 'cordin' to my notions. I ain't thought 'twas all the time."

"Well, I think you air dreadful silly, father."

"Well, I don't think 'twould amount to much goin' anyhow, to tell the truth."

"I would go, grandpa," said Fanny.

But Abel stood fast in his position. His wife, and Fanny, who was anxious to acquit herself honourably in the matter, pleaded with him to no purpose. He was proof against even Ephraim's reproaches and sarcasms. "Well, stay to home, an' be a kitchen colonel all your life, if you want to," shouted Ephraim, as he strode out of the yard; "it's all you're fit for, 'cordin' to my way of thinkin'."

ABEL WENT INTO THE HOUSE and pushed Fanny away from the sink. "If there's anything else you want to do, Fanny," said he, "you'd better go and do it. I ain't got another thing to set my hand to now."

Fanny looked at her grandmother.

"If he *ain't* goin', you might jest as well go an' get ready," said Mrs. Lee.

In a few minutes Abel heard Fanny's voice calling over to Abby: "Abby, Abby, wait for me! I'm goin', after all. It won't take me but a minute to get ready." And Fanny's voice sounded sweeter than a bird's to her grandfather at the kitchen sink.

Abel had a hard day of it. Putting down the sitting-room carpet was painful work for his old joints, and then there was churning to be done. When Fanny came home he sat in the old rocking-chair in the kitchen, with his head back, fast asleep. Presently his wife came out and aroused him. "Wake up,

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father," said she; "I want to tell you somethin'." Abel looked heavily up at her. "I—ruther guess Fanny an' that Page feller have settled it betwixt 'em," whispered Mrs. Lee.

Abel's head was up in a minute, and he was looking at her, all alert. "You don't say so, mother!" Suddenly the old man put his hand up to his eyes and sobbed.

"Why, how silly you are, father!" said his wife. Then she went over to a window with a brisk step and stood there as if looking out. When she turned around her eyes were red. "I think you'd better go to bed, father, an' not set there dozin' in that chair any longer," said she, sharply; "you're all tuckered out."

THE NEXT DAY, when Abel had to stand a running fire relative to the Boston trip from Ephraim, he gave one counter-shot—the announcement of Fanny's engagement. He listened while Ephraim related the pleasures of his excursion and berated him; then he turned on him with an artfulness born of patience. "S'pose you've heard the news?" said he.

"What news?"

"Well, I s'pose our Fanny an' John Page's son have 'bout concluded to make a match on't."

"H'm!" Ephraim stood looking at him. "When they goin' to git married?"

"Well, I dunno. Mother was saying she thought mebbe some time in the fall."

"H'm! Well, there's slips. Mebbe she won't git him, arter all. It's best not to be too sure 'bout it."

But Ephraim turned on his heel and went home across the yard, and left Abel to his Sunday peace.

Abel had to work harder than usual that summer. It was Fanny's vacation time, and she had been accustomed to assist some about the housework, so Abel's labours had been lightened a little during hot weather. But this summer Fanny was sewing, getting ready to be married in the fall, and she could not do much else, so her grandfather got no respite in his kitchen work through the long hot days. He grew thinner and older, but he never complained even to himself. He was radiant over Fanny. She was going to make a match that would lift her out of all his own struggles and hardships. Poor old Abel, in the midst of his hard, pitiful little whirlpool, watched Fanny joyously making her way out of it, and no longer thought of himself.

Fanny was married in October. There was quite a large evening wedding, and Mrs. Lee had wedding-cake and pound-cake and tea and coffee passed around for refreshments. Fanny and her bridegroom were standing before the minister, who had already begun the ceremony. Fanny, all in white, bent her head delicately under her veil; her cheeks showed through it like roses. The bridegroom kept his handsome boyish face upon the minister with a brave and resolute air. Abel and his wife stood near with solemn and tearful faces. The four boarders stood together in a corner. The rooms were crowded with people in creaking silks and Sunday coats, and the air was heavy with cake and coffee and flowers.

Suddenly, in the midst of the ceremony, Mrs. Lee nudged Abel. "The milk is burnin', father," she whispered; "go out quick an' lift it off."

Abel looked at her. "Be quick," she whispered again; "the milk for the coffee is burnin'. Don't stan' there lookin', for mercy's sake!"

Abel tiptoed out solemnly, with his best boots creaking.

When he returned, Fanny was married, and the people were crowding around her. He felt a heavy poke in his side, and there was Ephraim. "Had to go out an' be kitchen colonel, didn't ye, Abel?" said he, quite loud.

The bridal couple drove away, and the guests dispersed gradually. Mrs. Lee had to stay in the parlour until the last of them disappeared; but as soon as Fanny and her husband had gone, Abel changed his clothes and went into the kitchen. Things needed to be set to rights a little before morning.

The happy bridal pair rode away through the October night, the wedding guests chattered merrily in the parlour and flocked gaily down the street, and the kitchen colonel fought faithfully in his humble field, where maybe he would some day win a homely glory all his own.

Woodcut by Richard Bennett, from "The Book Dial."

When Young Hearts Break

By HEINRICH HEINE

Translated by Louis Untermeyer

WHEN young hearts break with passion
The stars break into laughter,
They laugh and, in their fashion,
Gossip a long time after:

"Poor souls, those mortals languish
With Love; 'tis all they cherish.
It pays them back with anguish
And pain until they perish.

"We never can discover
This Love, so brief and breathless,
So fatal to each lover—
And hence we stars are deathless."

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The Lost Silk Hat

By
LORD DUNSANY

CHARACTERS
THE CALLER.
THE LABOURER.
THE CLERK.
THE POET.
THE POLICEMAN.

SCENE—*A fashionable London street.* THE CALLER *stands on a doorstep, "faultlessly dressed," but without a hat. At first he shows despair, then a new thought engrosses him. Enter* THE LABOURER.

THE CALLER—Excuse me a moment. Excuse me . . . but . . . I'd be greatly obliged to you if . . . if you could see your way . . . in fact, you can be of great service to me if . . .

THE LABOURER—Glad to do what I can, sir.

CALLER—Well, all I really want you to do is just to ring that bell and go up and say . . . er—say that you've come to see to the drains, or anything like that, you know, and get hold of my hat for me.

LABOURER—Get hold of your 'at!

CALLER—Yes. You see, I left my hat behind, most unfortunately. It's in the drawing-room (*points to window*), that room there, half under the long sofa, the far end from the door. And if you could possibly go and get it, why I'd be (THE LABOURER's *expression changes*) . . . Why, what's the matter?

LABOURER (*firmly*)—I don't like this job.

CALLER—Don't like this job! But, my dear fellow, don't be silly; what possible harm . . .?

LABOURER—Ah-h. That's what I don't know.

CALLER—But what harm can there possibly be in so simple a request? What harm does there seem to be?

LABOURER—Oh, it seems all right.

CALLER—*Well,* then.

LABOURER—All these crack jobs do seem all right.

CALLER—But I'm not asking you to rob the house.

LABOURER—Don't seem as if you are, certainly, but I don't like the looks of it; what if there's things what I can't 'elp taking when I gets inside?

CALLER—I only want my hat . . . here, I say, please don't go away . . . here's a sovereign; it will only take you a minute.

LABOURER—*What I want to know* . . .

CALLER—Yes?

LABOURER—. . . is what's *in* that hat?

CALLER—What's *in* the hat?

LABOURER—Yes; that's what I want to know.

CALLER—What's *in* the hat?

LABOURER—Yes; you aren't going to give me a sovereign . . .

CALLER—I'll give you two sovereigns.

LABOURER—You aren't going to give me a sovereign, and rise it to two sovereigns, for an *empty* hat.

CALLER—But I must have my hat. I can't be seen in the streets like this. There's nothing *in* the hat. What do you think's in the hat?

LABOURER—Ah. I'm not clever enough to say that, but it looks as if the papers was in that hat.

CALLER—The papers?

LABOURER—Yes; the papers proving (if you can get them) that you're the heir to that big house, and some poor innocent will be defrauded.

CALLER—Look here, the hat's absolutely empty. I *must* have my hat. If there's anything in it, you shall have it yourself, as well as the two pounds, only get me my hat.

LABOURER—Well, that seems all right.

CALLER—That's right; then you'll run up and get it?

LABOURER—Seems all right to me and seems all right to you. But it's the police what you and I have got to think of. Will it seem all right to them?

CALLER—Oh, for heaven's sake . . .

LABOURER (*with foolish cunning*)—Ah.

CALLER—What a hopeless fool you are!

LABOURER—Ah.

CALLER—Look here——

LABOURER—Ah, I got you there, mister.

CALLER—Look here, for goodness' sake, don't go.

LABOURER—Ah! (*Exits.*)

(*Enter* THE CLERK)

CALLER—Excuse me, sir. Excuse my asking you, but, as you see, I am without a hat. I shall be extraordinarily obliged to you if you would be so very good as to get it for me (pretend you have come to wind the clocks, you know). I left it in the drawing-room of this house, half under the long sofa, the far end.

THE CLERK—Oh—er—all right, only . . .

CALLER—Thanks so much, I am immensely indebted to you. Just say you've come to wind the clocks, you know.

CLERK—I . . . er . . . don't think I'm very good at winding clocks, you know.

CALLER—Oh, that's all right, just stand in front of the clock and fool about with it. That's all they ever do. I must warn you there's a lady in the room.

CLERK—Oh.

CALLER—But that's all right, you know. Just walk past up to the clock.

CLERK—But I think, if you don't mind, as there's some one there . . .

CALLER—Oh, but she's quite young, and very, very beautiful, and . . .

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CLERK—Why don't you get it yourself?

CALLER—That is impossible.

CLERK—Impossible?

CALLER—Yes; I have sprained my ankle.

CLERK—Oh. Is it bad?

CALLER—Yes, very bad indeed.

CLERK—I don't mind trying to carry you up.

CALLER—No, that would be worse. My foot has to be kept on the ground.

CLERK—But how will you get home?

CALLER—I can walk all right on the flat.

CLERK—I'm afraid I have to be going on. It's rather later than I thought.

CALLER—But, for goodness' sake, don't leave me. You can't leave me here like this without a hat.

CLERK—I'm afraid I must, it's later than I thought. (*Exits.*)

(*Enter* THE POET)

CALLER—Excuse me, sir. Excuse my stopping you. But I should be immensely obliged to you if you would do me a very great favour. I have unfortunately left my hat behind while calling at this house. It is half under the long sofa, at the far end. If you could possibly be so kind as to pretend you have come to tune the piano, and fetch my hat for me, I should be enormously grateful to you.

THE POET—But why cannot you get it for yourself?

CALLER—I cannot.

POET—If you would tell me the reason, perhaps I could help you.

CALLER—I cannot. I can never enter that house again.

POET—If you have committed a murder, by all means tell me. I am not sufficiently interested in ethics to wish to have you hanged for it.

CALLER—Do I look like a murderer?

POET—No, of course not. I am only saying that you can safely trust me, for not only do the statute book and its penalties rather tend to bore me, but murder itself has always had a certain fascination for me. I write delicate and fastidious lyrics, yet, strange as it may appear, I read every murder trial, and my sympathies are always with the prisoner.

CALLER—But I tell you I am not a murderer.

POET—Then what have you done?

CALLER—I have quarreled with a lady in that house, and have sworn to join the Bosnians and die in Africa.

POET—But this is beautiful.

CALLER—Unforunately, I forgot my hat.

POET—You go to die for a hopeless love, and in a far country; it was the wont of the troubadours.

CALLER—But you will get my hat for me?

POET—That I will gladly do for you. But we must find an adequate reason for entering the house.

CALLER—You pretend to tune the piano.

POET—That, unfortunately, is impossible. The sound of a piano being unskilfully handled is to me what the continual drop of cold water on the same part of the head is said to be in countries where that interesting torture is practised. There is . . .

CALLER—But what are we to do?

POET—There is a house where kind friends of mine have given me that security and comfort that are a poet's necessity. But there was a governess there and a piano. It is years and years since I was able even to see the faces of those friends without an inward shudder.

CALLER—Well, we'll have to think of something else.

POET—You are bringing back to these unhappy days the romance of an age of which the ballads tell us that kings sometimes fought in no other armour than their lady's nightshirt.

CALLER—Yes, but, you know, first of all I must get my *hat*.

POET—But why?

CALLER—I cannot possibly be seen in the streets without a hat.

POET—Why not?

CALLER—It can't be done.

POET—But you confuse externals with essentials.

CALLER—I don't know what you call essentials, but being decently dressed in London seems pretty essential to me.

POET—A hat is not one of the essential things of life.

CALLER—I don't want to appear rude, but my hat isn't quite like yours.

POET—Let us sit down and talk of things that matter, things that will be remembered after a hundred years. (*They sit.*) Regarded in this light, one sees at once the triviality of hats. But to die and die beautifully for a hopeless love, that is a thing one could make a lyric about. That is the test of essential things—try and imagine them in a lyric. One could not write a lyric about a hat.

CALLER—I don't care whether you could write a lyric about my hat or whether you couldn't. All I know is that I am not going to make myself absolutely ridiculous by walking about London without a hat. Will you get it for me or will you not?

POET—To take any part in the tuning of a piano is impossible to me.

CALLER—Well, pretend you've come to look at the radiator. They have one under the window, and I happen to know it leaks.

POET—I suppose it has an artistic decoration on it?

CALLER—Yes; I think so.

POET—Then I decline to look at it or to go near it. I know these decorations in cast-iron. I once saw a pot-bellied Egyptian god, named Bes, and he was *meant* to be ugly, but he wasn't as ugly as these decorations that the twentieth century can make with machinery. What has a plumber got to do with art that he should dare to attempt decoration?

CALLER—Then you won't help me?

POET—I won't look at ugly things, and I won't listen to ugly noises; but if you can think of any reasonable plan, I don't mind helping you.

CALLER—I can think of nothing else. You don't look like a plumber or a clock-winder. I can think of nothing more. I have had a terrible ordeal, and I am not in the condition to think calmly.

POET—Then you will have to leave your hat to its altered destiny.

CALLER—Why can't you think of a plan? If you're a poet, thinking's rather in your line.

POET—If I could bring my thoughts to contemplate

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so absurd a thing as a hat for any length of time, no doubt I could think of a plan, but the very triviality of the theme seems to scare them away.

CALLER (*rising*)—Then I must get it myself.

POET—For heaven's sake, don't do that! Think what it means.

CALLER—I know it will seem absurd, but not so absurd as walking through London without it.

POET—I don't mean that. But you will make it up. You will forgive each other, and you will marry her and have a family of noisy, pimply children like everyone else, and Romance will be dead. No, don't ring that bell. Go and buy a bayonet or whatever one does buy, and join the Bosnians.

CALLER—I tell you I can't, without a hat.

POET—What is a hat! Will you sacrifice for it a beautiful doom? Think of your bones, neglected and forgotten, lying forlornly because of hopeless love on endless golden sands. Lying forlorn! As Keats said: what a word. Forlorn in Africa. The careless Bedouins going past by day, at night the lion's roar, the grievous voice of the desert.

CALLER—As a matter of fact, I don't think you're right in speaking of it as desert. The Bosnians, I believe, are only taking it because it is supposed to be the most fertile land in the world.

POET—What of that? You will not be remembered by geography and statistics, but by golden-mouthed Romance. And that is how Romance sees Africa.

CALLER—Well, I'm going to get my hat.

POET—Think! Think! If you enter by that door you will never fall among the foremost Bosnians. You will never die in a far-off, lonely land, to lie by immense Sahara. And she will never weep for your beautiful doom and call herself cruel in vain.

CALLER—Hark! She is playing the piano. It seems to me that she might be unhappy about it for years. I don't see much good in that.

POET—No. *I* will comfort her.

CALLER—I'm damned if you do! Look here! I don't mind saying: I'm damned if you do!

POET—Calm yourself. Calm yourself. I do not mean in that way.

CALLER—Then what on earth do you mean?

POET—I will make songs about your beautiful death—glad songs and sad songs. They shall be glad because they tell again the noble tradition of the troubadours, and sad because they tell of your sorrowful destiny and of your hopeless love. I shall make legends also about your lonely bones, telling perhaps how some Arabian men, finding them in the desert by some oasis, memorable in war, wonder who loved them. And then, as I read them to her, she weeps perhaps a little, and I read, instead, of the glory of the soldier, how it overtops our transitory. . . .

CALLER—Look here. I'm not aware that you've ever been introduced to her.

POET—A trifle, a trifle.

CALLER—It seems to me that you're in rather an undue hurry for me to get a Jubu spear in me; but I'm going to get my hat first.

POET—I appeal to you. I appeal to you in the name of beautiful battles, high deeds and lost causes, in the name of love tales told to cruel maidens and told in vain. In the name of stricken hearts broken like beautiful harp-strings I appeal to you. I appeal in the ancient holy name of Romance: *do not ring that bell.* (CALLER *rings the bell.*)

POET (*sitting down, abject*)—You will marry. You will sometimes take a ticket with your wife as far as Paris. Perhaps as far as Cannes. Then the family will come, a large, sprawling family as far as the eye can see—I speak in hyperbole—you'll earn money, and feed it, and be like all the rest. No monument will ever be set up to your memory, but . . . (SERVANT *answers bell.* CALLER *says something inaudible. Exit through door.*)

POET (*rising, lifting hand*) . . . but let there be graven in brass upon this house: Romance was born again here out of due time and died young. (*He sits down. Enter* LABOURER *and* CLERK, *with* POLICEMAN. *The music stops.*)

POLICEMAN—Anything wrong here?

POET—Everything's wrong. They're going to kill Romance.

POLICEMAN (*to* LABOURER)—This gentleman doesn't seem quite right, somehow.

LABOURER—They're none of them quite right today. (*Music starts again.*)

POET—My God! It is a duet.

POLICEMAN—He seems a bit wrong.

LABOURER—You should 'a' seen the other one.

CURTAIN

Mr. Pickwick

PICKWICK GOES THROUGH LIFE with that god-like gullibility which is the key to all adventures. The greenhorn is the ultimate victor in everything; it is he that gets the most out of life. Because Pickwick is led away by Jingle, he will be led to the White Hart Inn, and see the only Weller cleaning boots in the courtyard. Because he is bamboozled by Dodson and Fogg, he will enter the prison house like a paladin, and rescue the man and the woman who have wronged him most. His soul will never starve for exploits or excitements who is wise enough to be made a fool of. He will make himself happy in the traps that have been laid for him; he will roll in their nets and sleep. All doors will fly open to him who has a mildness more defiant than mere courage. The whole is unerringly expressed in one fortunate phrase—he will be always "taken in." To be taken in everywhere is to see the inside of everything. It is the hospitality of circumstance. With torches and trumpets, like a guest, the greenhorn is taken in by Life. And the sceptic is cast out by it.

GILBERT KEITH CHESTERTON.

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Hors-d'oeuvres from the Newest Books

Aubrey Beardsley

A Funeral Cortège Becomes a Bandwagon

For twenty-four hours the crowds poured through (New York) City Hall in double file, and when at noon on Tuesday the casket was closed, three hundred thousand people had been disappointed.

Mad things happened. An Arctic explorer, Capt. Parker Snow, brought to the casket a leaf from a prayer-book that he had found in Polar ices by the skeleton of a victim in the ill-fated expedition of Sir John Franklin. The only legible word on the page was "martyr," and Capt. Snow wanted the relic put in the coffin with Lincoln's corpse. It was done. . . . Bands wailed dirges, and guns and bells boomed as before.

. . . At the station waited the locomotive "Union," the same that had brought Lincoln into New York in 1861 on his inauguration journey. Fifteen minutes after four the funeral train set out for Albany, and as it did so, hundreds of persons who had been unable to view the remains entrained for Chicago or other Western stops where the funeral services would be tremendous.

Just at sundown the mourners from their funeral coaches saw a strange sight on the opposite bank of the Hudson River. Masses of country people were staging a weird tableau on a hillside around a newly made grave. Bands were playing sad music, and a beautiful lady, made up as the Goddess of Liberty, was dipping a flag into the hole.

. . . News of the extravagance with which the funeral was being received whipped expectant cities into a frenzy. Each must now be outdoing anything that any other city had done. Decorations must be larger, crowds bigger, ceremonies finer, orations more idolatrous. Speakers must exalt the dead man with wilder phrases, likening him to higher prophets than had any orators before.

The thing had become half circus, half heartbreak.

Myths After Lincoln. Lloyd Lewis.

Achievement—and Victory

"No human being can be justified through another human being. No human being ought even to be affected by another human being."

He paused a moment. "I'll tell you something about myself, Mrs. Duerden."

Hermia forgot for a moment her sick child in the satisfaction it was to her to receive a confidence from this man of no particular significance in the world.

"I am, by disposition, jealous and ambitious," said Saul. "That isn't anything unusual, of course. The most crawling little cadger wants things from life and people—believes he has a right to them. But Jews have, by their circumstances, to fight for a place, so they are naturally more competitive than others. Well, Mrs. Duerden, I was always pitting myself against actual or imaginary rivals. And when I was beaten I suffered. I don't now—at any rate, not so much. One day it struck me suddenly: whether anyone else is better or worse, I am I. I am not made different by the other man's triumph or failure. If I can run the course in so many seconds, my running time is not altered because my rival can run it in a second less. I may not be the winner of the race, but my achievement is what it is. And if I am the winner of the race, my achievement is still only what it is. . . ."

The Coming of the Lord. Sarah Gertrude Millin.

Bertrand Russell on the Evils of Fear

Most of the stock of fear with which men and women go through life is implanted in them during the first six years of childhood, either with a view to making them "good" or by contagion from the fears of parents. For my part, I care nothing for the virtue which is rooted in fear, and I should seek everywhere, but more especially in early education, to produce human beings capable of social coöperation to the necessary extent for reasons with which fear should have nothing whatever to do. This is in my opinion the essential problem of moral education—a problem by no means insoluble, and only thought to be difficult owing to the weight of prejudice and cruel tradition.

If I Could Preach Just Once.

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The Things "They" Say

"I liked you best when you were whistling to me," he said. But in his senses he thought: "I should be a madman not to snatch at her!" And in his soul he thought: "I shall marry her. As sure as tomorrow follows today, I shall marry her!"

"I liked *you* best when you were hunting for me at Poll's Camp," said Gerda. "But I can't understand——"

"What can't you understand, Gerda?"

"I can't understand why I don't want you to touch me just now. But oh! if you only knew what things they say in the town about girls and men!"

She looked him straight in the face, with an ambiguous tilt of her soft, rounded chin. Something had come between them—something that troubled him seriously, though not with the sense of any unscalable barrier.

"What things do they say in the town?" he asked.

At this she clapped her hands to her cheeks, and a look of troubled bewilderment crossed her fixed gaze.

He began to wonder if the girl, for all her coquetries, was not abnormally innocent. Perhaps the extreme lewdness of lads like Bob Weevil had, in some of those furtive conclaves between young people that are always so complete a mystery to older persons, given her some kind of startled shock.

Slowly her hands fell to her sides, and the troubled look faded; but she still faced him with a faint, tremulous frown, while the delicate curves about her eyes took on that expression of monumental beseeching, such as one sees sometimes in antique marbles.

His craving to take her in his arms was checked by a wave of overpowering tenderness.

Wolf Solent. John Cowper Powys.

Horses on the Battle Ground

Things become quieter, but the cries do not cease. "What's up, Albert?" I ask.

"A couple of columns over there have got it in the neck."

The cries continued. It is not men, they could not cry so terribly.

"Wounded horses," says Kat.

It's unendurable. It is the moaning of the world, it is the martyred creation, wild with anguish, filled with terror, and groaning.

We are pale. Detering stands up. "God! For God's sake! Shoot them!"

He is a farmer and very fond of horses. It gets under his skin. Then as if deliberately the fire dies down again. The screaming of the beasts becomes louder. One can no longer distinguish whence in this now quiet, silvery landscape it comes; ghostly, invisible, it is everywhere, between heaven and earth it rolls on immeasurably. Detering raves and yells out: "Shoot them! Shoot them, can't you? Damn you again!"

"They must look after the men first," says Kat quietly. . . .

We sit down and hold our ears. But this appalling noise, these groans and screams penetrate everywhere. We can bear almost anything. But now the sweat breaks out on us. We must get up and run, no matter where, but where these cries can no longer be heard. And it is not men, only horses.

Detering walks up and down, cursing.

All Quiet on the Western Front.
Erich Maria Remarque.

A Gangster at Bay

Otero crawled out the window onto the fire-escape and Rico followed him. Blondy began to scream.

"Shut your mouth," said Rico, "and if the bulls come up the front way kid 'em along. Make 'em think you got me hid, see?"

"O. K., Rico," said Blondy.

Otero and Rico went down the fire-escape. They stopped at the foot of the fire-escape and Rico took Otero by the arm.

"Listen," he said, "here's the dope. We got to get to Ma Magdalena's. She's got most of my jack and a good hide-out. It ain't gonna be easy, because the bulls're probably scattered all around. But once we get there, we're O. K."

They started. Rico knew every alley in the district, and he led Otero by such a safe route that they were soon within a block and a half of Ma Magdalena's without having crossed a main thoroughfare. . . . They left the alley and were half way across the street when somebody shouted at them to halt. Without turning, they broke into a run.

"It's only one bull," said Rico.

A bullet sang over them and they heard the blast of a policeman's whistle. Otero stopped in his tracks, turned, took a steady aim and fired. The policeman staggered forward three or four steps and fell to his knees. "Got him," said Otero.

Rico turned. The policeman was kneeling in the middle of the street, trying to steady his hand for a shot.

"Duck," cried Rico, simultaneously with the firing of the policeman's gun.

Otero twisted sideways, looked at Rico with surprise, then dropped his gun, and began to walk up the alley holding his stomach. Rico put his arm around him and, pulling him over to the side of the alley where he could keep a telephone pole between them and the policemen, guided him along. But after a few steps, Otero pulled away from Rico and cried:

"Run, Rico, run. They got me sure. I can't feel nothing."

Rico grabbed him and tried to pull him along, but he resisted. "God damn you, Rico," cried Otero, "run! I can't go no farther. I'm done for."

Rico heard the roar of a police car. He released Otero, who staggered away from him and then fell flat on his back.

Little Cæsar. W. R. Burnett.

[The Golden Book *Editorial Department, as a service to readers, will be glad to furnish information as to publisher, price, etc., of any volume mentioned here.*]

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Woodcuts by
J. J. Lankes

Aftermath

James Lane Allen

The Story So Far:

A TWELVEMONTHS' friendship between Adam Moss, the narrator, and Georgiana Cobb, the elder daughter of a neighbouring family of Kentucky gentlefolk, has ripened into love and resulted in their engagement. The period is that of the 1850's; and in the course of an almost idyllic narrative the reader is introduced to other members of the Cobb family—Georgiana's sister Sylvia, a vivacious girl of eighteen, Mrs. Cobb, the mother of the two girls, and their brother Joseph, a cadet at West Point, who, accompanied by three military men of high rank at the Point, has returned to Kentucky for a short visit at the home of his mother and sisters.

A MOST PESTIFEROUS VARIETY of caterpillar has infested the tops of my cherry-trees this summer, and during the general's encampment near Mrs. Cobb I happened several times to be mounted on my step-ladder, busy with my pruning-shears, when he was decoying her around her garden—just over the fence—buckled in to suffocation, and with his long epaulettes golden in the sun like tassels of the corn. I was engaged in exterminating this insect on the last day of his sojourn. They were passing almost beneath me on the other side; he had been talking; I heard her brief reply, in a voice low and full of dignity:

"I have been married, sir!"

"Mother of Georgiana!" I cried, within myself. But had she ever thought of taking a second husband she must have seen through "Old Drumbeater," as Sylvia called him. There were times when their breakfast would be late—for the sake of letting his chicken be broiled in slow perfection, or his rolls or waffles come to a faultless brown; and I, being at work near the garden fence, would hear him tramping up and down the walk on the other side and swearing at a family that had such irregular meals. The camel, a lean beast, requires an extraordinary supply of food, which it proceeds to store away in its hump as nourishment to be drawn upon while it is crossing the desert. There may be no long campaigning before the general; but if there were and rations were short, why could he not live upon his own back? It is of a thickness, a roundness, and an impenetrability that would have justified Jackson in using him as a cotton-bale at the battle of New Orleans.

Thus in my little corner of the world we have all been at the same business of love, and I wonder whether the corner be not the world itself: Mrs. Cobb and the general, Georgiana and I, the sewing-girl and the carpenter; for I had forgotten to note how quickly these two have found out that they want each other. My arbour is at his service, if he wishes it; and Jack shall keep silent about the mastodon.

It is true that from this sentimental enumeration I have omitted the name of Mrs. Walters; but there is a secret here which not even Georgiana herself will ever get from me. Mrs. Walters came to this town twenty years ago from the region of Bowling Green. Some years afterwards I made a trip into that part of the State to hear the mocking-bird—for it fills those more southern groves, but never visits ours; and while there I stepped by accident on this discovery: *There never was any Mr. Walters.* It is her maiden name. But as I see the freedom of her life and reflect upon the things that a widow can do and an old maid cannot—with her own sex and with mine—I commend her wisdom and leave her at peace. Indeed I have gone so far, when she has asked for my sympathy, as to lament with her Mr. Walters' death. After all, what great difference is there between her weeping for him because he is no more, and her weeping for him because he never was? After which she freshens herself up with another handkerchief, Florida water, and a touch of May roses from the apothecary's.

And I have omitted the name of Sylvia; but then Sylvia's name, like that of Lot's wife, can never be used as one of a class, and she herself must always be spoken of alone. However, if Sylvia had been Lot's wife she would not have turned to a pillar of salt, she would most probably have become a geyser.

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The Second of Three Parts

By JAMES LANE ALLEN

I don't know why, but she went on a visit to Henderson after that evening in the arbour. I suspect the governing power of Georgiana's wisdom to have been put forth here, for within a few days I received from Sylvia a letter which she asked me not to show to Georgiana, and in which she invited me to correspond with her secretly. The letter was of a singularly adhesive quality as to the emotions. Throughout she referred to herself as "the exile," although it was plain that she wrote in the highest spirits; and in concluding she openly charged Georgiana with having given her a black eye—a most unspeakable phrase, surely picked up in the school-room. As a return for the black eye, Sylvia said that she had composed a poem to herself, a copy of which she enclosed.

I quote Sylvia's verses, "Lines to Myself," upon her wrongs and her banishment. They show features of metrical excess, and can scarcely claim to reflect the polish of her calmer art; but they are of value to me as proving that whatever the rebuke Georgiana may have given, it had rebounded from that elastic spirit.

Oh! she was a lovely girl,
  So pretty and so fair,
With gentle, love-lit *eyes,*
  And wavy, dark brown hair.

I loved the gentle girl,
  But, oh! I heaved a sigh
When first she told me she could see
  Out of only *one* eye.

But soon I thought within myself
  I'd better save my tear and sigh
To bestow upon an older person I know
  Who has more than one eye.

She is brave and intelligent
  Too. She is witty and wise.
She'll accomplish more now than *another person*
  Who has *two* eyes.

Ah, you need not pity *her!*
  She needs not your tear and sigh.
She'll make good use, I tell you,
  Of her *one* remaining eye.

In the home where we are hastening,
  In our eternal Home on High,
See that *you* be not rivaled
  By the girl with only *one* eye.*

Having thus dealt a thrust at Georgiana, Sylvia seems to have turned in the spirit of revenge upon her mother; and when she came home some days ago she brought with her a distant cousin of her own age—a boy, enormously fat—whom she soon began to decoy around the garden as her mother had been decoyed by the general. Further to satirize the similarity of lovers, she one day pinned upon his shoulders rosettes of yellow ribbon.

Sylvia has now passed from Scott to Moore; and several times lately she has made herself heard in the garden with recitations to the fat boy on the subject of Peris weeping before the gates of Paradise, or warbling elegies under the green sea in regard to Araby's daughter. There is a real aptness in the latter reference; for this boy's true place in nature *is* the deep seas of the polar regions, where animals are coated with thick tissues of blubber. If Sylvia ever harpoons him, as she seems seriously bent on doing, she will have to drive her weapon in deep.

Yesterday she sprang across to me with her hair flying and an open letter in her hand.

"Oh, read it!" she cried, her face kindling with glory.

It turned out to be a letter from the great Mr. Prentice, of the Louisville *Journal*, accepting a poem she had lately sent him, and assigning her a fixed place

* Miss Sylvia could not have been speaking seriously when she wrote that she had "composed" this poem. It is known to be the work of another hand, though Sylvia certainly tampered with the original and produced a version of her own. J. L. A.

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among his vast and twinkling galaxy of Kentucky poetesses. The title of the poem was, "My Lover Kneels to None but God."

"I infer from this," I said, gravely, "that your lover is a Kentuckian."

"He is," cried Sylvia. "Oh, his peerless, haughty pride!"

"Well, I congratulate you, Sylvia," I continued, mildly, "upon having such an editor and such a lover; but I really think that your lover ought to kneel a little to Mr. Prentice on this one occasion."

"Never!" cried Sylvia. "I would spurn him as chaff!"

"Some day when you meet Mr. Prentice, Sylvia," I continued, further, "you will want to be very nice to him, and you might give him something new to parse."

Sylvia studied me dubiously; the subject is not one that reassures her.

"Because the other day I heard a very great friend of Mr. Prentice's say of him that when he was fifteen he could parse every sentence in Virgil and Homer. And if he could do that then, think what he must be able to do now, and the pleasure it must afford him!"

I would not embitter Sylvia's joy by intimating that perhaps Mr. Prentice's studious regard for much of the poetry that he published was based upon the fact that he could not parse it.

THERE HAS BEEN the most terrible trouble with the raccoon.

This morning the carpenter tied him in my yard as usual; but some time during the forenoon, in a fit of rage at his confinement, he pulled the collar over his head and was gone. Whither and how long no one knew; but it seems that at last, by dint of fences and trees, he attained to the unapproachable distinction of standing on the comb of Mrs. Walters' house—poor Mrs. Walters, who has always held him in such deadly fear! she would as soon have had him on the comb of her head. Advancing along the roof, he mounted the chimney. Glancing down this, he perhaps reached the conclusion that it was more like nature and a hollow tree than anything that civilization had yet been able to produce, and he proceeded to descend to the ground again by so dark and friendly a passage. His progress was stopped by a bundle of straw at the bottom, which he quickly tore away, and having emerged from a grove of asparagus in the fireplace, he found himself not on the earth, but in Mrs. Walters' bedroom. In what ways he now vented his ill-humour is not clear; but at last he climbed to the bed, white as no fuller could white it, and he dripping with soot. Here the ground beneath him was of such a suspicious and unreasonable softness that he apparently resolved to dig a hole and see what was the matter. In the course of his excavation he reached Mrs. Walters' feather-bed, upon which he must have fallen with fresh violence, tooth and nail, in the idea that so many feathers could not possibly mean feathers only.

It was about this time that Mrs. Walters returned from town, having left every window closed and every door locked, as is her custom. She threw open her door and started in, but paused, being greeted by a snow-storm of goose feathers that filled the air and now drifted outward in a downy smother of white.

"Why, what on earth is the matter?" she exclaimed, peering in, blank with bewilderment. Then her eyes caught sight of what had once been her bed. Sitting up in it was the raccoon, his long black jaws bearded with down, his head and ears stuck about with feathers, and his eyes blazing green with defiance.

She slammed and locked the door.

"Run for the sheriff!" she cried, in terror, to the boy who had brought her market basket; and she followed him as he fled.

"What is it, Mrs. Walters?" asked the sheriff, sternly, meeting her and bringing the handcuffs.

"There's somebody in my bed!" she cried, wringing her hands. "I believe it's the devil."

"It's my 'coon," said the carpenter, laughing; for by this time we were all gathered together.

"What a dear 'coon!" said the sewing-girl.

"Oh, Mrs. Walters! You are like Little Red Riding-hood!" said Sylvia.

"I can't arrest a 'coon, madam!" exclaimed the sheriff, red in the neck at being made ridiculous.

"Then arrest the carpenter!" cried poor, unhappy, excited Mrs. Walters, bursting into tears and hiding her face on Georgiana's shoulder.

And among us all Georgiana was the only comforter. She laid aside her own work for that day, spent the rest of it as Samaritan to her desperately wounded neighbour, and at nightfall, over the bed, now peaceful and snowy once more, she spread a marvelous priceless quilt that she had long been making to exhibit at the approaching World's Fair in New York.

"Georgiana," I said, as I walked home with her at bedtime, "it seems to me that things happen in order to show you off."

"Only think!" Georgiana replied; "she will never get into bed again without a shiver and a glance at the chimney. I begrudge her the quilt for one reason: it has a piece of one of your old satin waistcoats in it."

"Did she tell you that she had had those bedclothes ever since her marriage?"

"Yes; but I have always felt that she couldn't have been married very long."

"How long should you think?"

"Oh, well—about a minute."

"And yet she certainly has the clearest possible idea of Mr. Walters. I imagine that very few women ever come to know their husbands as perfectly as Mrs. Walters knew hers."

"Or perhaps wish to."

III

THE END OF AUGUST—the night before my marriage. Several earthquakes have lately been felt in this part of the globe. Coming events cast their shocks before.

The news of it certainly came like the shock of an earthquake to many people of the town, who know perfectly well that no woman will allow the fruit and flowers to be carried off a place as a man will. The sagacious old soul who visits me yearly for young pie-plant actually hurried out and begged for a basketful of the roots at once, thus taking both time and the

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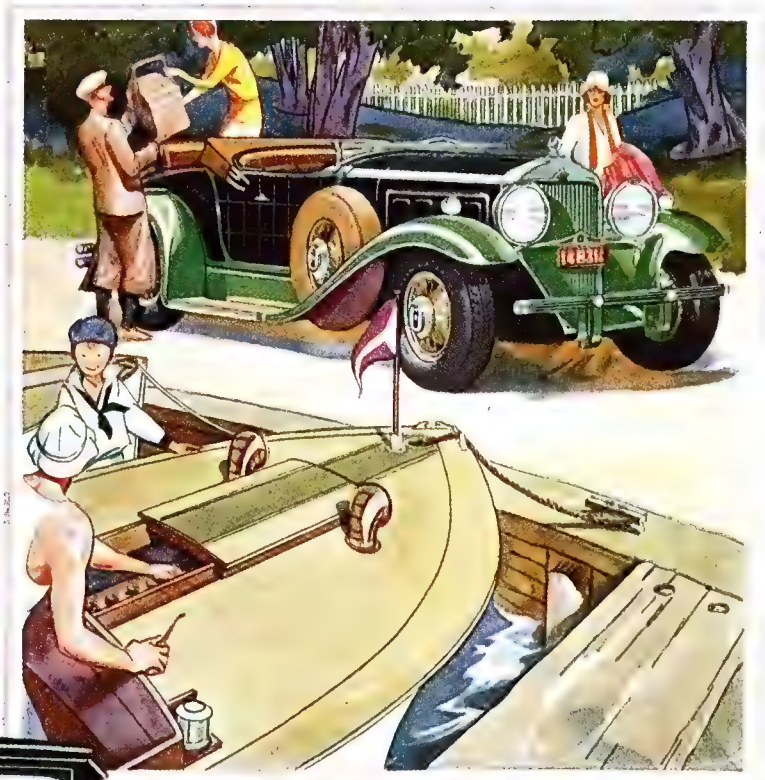

THE ROADSTER

THE SEDAN

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rhubarb by the forelock. And the old epicurean harpy whose passion is asparagus, having accosted me gruffly on the street with an inquiry as to the truth of my engagement and been quietly assured how true it was, informed me to my face that any man situated as happily as I am was an infernal fool to entangle himself with a wife, and bade me a curt and everlasting good-morning on the spot. Yet every day the theme of this old troubadour's talk around the hotels is female entanglements—mendacious, unwifely, and for him unavailing.

Through divers channels some of my fellow-creatures—specimens of the most dreadful prose—have let me know that upon marrying I shall forfeit their usurious regard. As to them, I shall relapse into the privacy of an orchard that has been plucked of its fruit. But my wonderment has grown on the other hand at the number of those to whom, as the significant unit of a family instead of a bachelor zero, I have now acquired a sterling mercantile valuation. Upon the whole, I may fairly compute that my relation to the human race has been totally changed by the little I may cease to give away and by the less that I shall need to buy.

And Mrs. Walters! Although I prefer to think of Mrs. Walters as a singer, owing to her unaccountable powers of reminiscential vocalization, I have upon occasion classified her among the waders; and certainly, upon the day when my engagement to Georgiana transpired, she waded not only all around the town but all over it, sustained by a buoyancy of spirit that enabled her to keep her head above water in depths where her feet no longer touched the bottom.

It was the crowning triumph of this vacant soul's life to boast that she had made this match; and for the sake of giving her so much happiness, I think I should have been willing to marry Georgiana whether I loved her or not.

So we are all happy: Sylvia, who thus enters upon a family right to my flowers and to the distinction of being the only Miss Cobb; Dilsy, who, while gathering vegetables about the garden, long ago began to receive little bundles of quilt pieces thrown down to her with a smile and the right word from the window above; and Jack, who is to drive us on our bridal trip to the Blue Lick Springs.

In truth, I have hesitated somewhat between Blue Lick and Mud Lick, though to a man in my condition there can be no great difference between blue and mud. And I had thought of the Harrodsburg Springs, but the negro musicians there were lately hurried off to Canada by the underground railway, out of which fact has grown a lawsuit for damages between the proprietor and his abolitionist guest.

By Fred Goldberg *Courtesy David Ashley, Inc.*

A few weeks ago I intrusted a secret to Georgiana. I told her that before she condescended to shine upon this part of the world—now the heavenlier part—I had been engaged upon certain researches and discoveries relating to Kentucky birds, especially to the Kentucky warbler. I admitted that these studies had been wretchedly put aside under the more pressing necessity of fixing the attention of all my powers, ornithological and other, upon her garden window. But as I placed specimens of my notes and drawings in her hand, I remarked gravely that after our marriage I should be ready to push my work forward without delay.

All this was meant to give her a delightful surprise; and indeed she examined the evidences of my undertaking with devouring and triumphant eagerness. But what was my amazement when she handed them back in silence, and with a face as white although as fragrant as a rose.

"I have distressed you, Georgiana!" I cried, "and my only thought had been to give you pleasure. I am always doing something wrong!"

She closed her eyes and passed her fingers searchingly across her brow, as we sometimes instinctively try to brush away our cares. Then she sat looking down rather pitifully at her palms, as they lay in her lap.

"You have shared your secret with me," she said, solemnly, at length. "I'll share mine with you. It is the only fear that I have ever felt regarding our future. It has never left me; and what you have just shown me fills me with terror."

I sat aghast.

"I am not deceived," she continued; "you have not forgotten nature. It draws you more powerfully than anything else in the world. Whenever you speak of it, you say the right thing, you find the right word, you get the right meaning. With nature alone you are perfectly natural. Towards society you show your shabby, awkward, trivial, uncomfortable side. But these drawings, these notes—there lies your power, your gift, your home. You truly belong to the woodsmen."

Never used to study myself, I listened to this as to fresh talk about a stranger.

"Do you not foresee what will happen?" she went on, with emotion. "After we have been married a while you will begin to wander off—at first for part of a day, then for a day, then for a day and a night, then for days and nights together. That was the way with Audubon, that was the way with Wilson, that is the way with Thoreau, that will be the way with all whom nature draws as it draws you. And me—think of me—at home! A woman not able to go with you! Not able to wade the creeks and swim the rivers!

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Not able to sleep out in the brown leaves, to endure the rain, the cold, the travel! And so I shall never be able to fill your life with mine as you fill mine with yours. As time passes, I shall fill it less and less. Every spring nature will be just as young to you; I shall be always older. The water you love ripples, never wrinkles. I shall cease rippling and begin wrinkling. No matter what happens, each summer the birds get fresh feathers; only think how my old ones will never drop out. I shall want you to go on with your work. If I am to be your wife, I must be wings to you. But think of compelling me to furnish you the wings with which to leave me! What is a little book on Kentucky birds in comparison with my happiness!"

By Fred Goldberg *Courtesy David Ashley, Inc.*

SHE WAS SO DEEPLY moved that my one desire was to uproot her fears on the spot.

"Then there shall be no little book on Kentucky birds!" I cried. "I'll throw these things into the fire as soon as I go home. Only say what you wish me to be, Georgiana," I continued laughing, "and I'll be it—if it's the town pump."

"Then if I could only be the town well," she said, with a poor little effort to make a heavy heart all at once go merrily again.

Bent on making it go merrily as long as I shall live, the following day I called out to her at the window:

"Georgiana, I'm improving. I'm getting along."

"What do you mean?" she asked.

"Well, in town this morning they chose me as one of the judges of vegetables at the fair next month. I said, 'Gentlemen, I expect to be married before that time, and I do not intend to be separated from my wife. Will she have the privilege of accompanying me among these competing vegetables?' And last month they made me director of a turnpike company—I suppose because it runs through my farm. Today at a meeting of the directors I said, 'Gentlemen, how far is this turnpike to run? I will direct it to the end of my farm and not a step farther. I do not wish to be separated from my wife.'"

Georgiana has teased me a good deal in my life. It is well to let a woman taste of the tree of knowledge whose fruit she is fond of dispensing.

"You'd better be careful!" she said, archly. "Remember, I haven't married you yet."

"I *am* careful," I replied. "I haven't married *you* yet, either! My idea, Georgiana," I continued, "is to plant a grove and raise cocoons. That would gratify my love of nature and your fancy for silk dresses. I could have my silk woven and spun in our manufactory at Newport, Kentucky; and you know that we couldn't possibly lose each other among the mulberry trees."

"You'd better take care!" she repeated. "Do you expect to talk to me in this style after we are married?"

"That will all depend upon how you talk to me," I answered. "But I have always understood married life to be the season when the worm begins to turn."

Despite my levity, I have been secretly stricken with remorse at the monstrous selfishness behind my words. I was really no better than those men who say to their wives:

"While I was trying to win you, the work of my life was secondary—you were everything. Now that I have won you, it will be everything, and you must not stand in the way."

But the thought is insupportable that Georgiana should not be happy with me at any cost. I divine now the reason of the effort she has long been making to win me from nature; so I have privately set about changing the character of my life with the idea of suiting it to some other work in which she too may be content. And thus it has come about that during the August now ended—always the month of the year in which my nature will go its solitary way and seek its woodland peace—I have hung about the town as one who is offered for hire to a master whom he has never seen and for a work that he hates to do. Many of the affairs that engage the passions of my fellow-beings are to me as the gray stubble through which I walk in the September fields—the rotting wastage of harvests long since gathered in. At other times I drive myself upon their sharp and piercing conflicts as a bird is blown uselessly again and again by some too strong a wind upon the spikes of the thorn. I hear the angry talk of our farmers and merchants, I listen to the fiery orations of our statesmen and the warning sermons of our divines. (Think of a human creature calling himself a divine.) The troubled ebb and flow of events in Kentucky, the larger movements of unrest throughout the great republic—these have replaced for me the old communings with nature that were full of music and of peace.

Evening after evening now I turn my conversations with Georgiana as gaily as I can upon some topic of the time. She is not always pleased with what I style my researches into civilized society. One evening in particular our talk was long and serious, beginning in shallows and then steering for deep waters.

"Well, Georgiana," I had said, "Miss Delia Webster has suddenly returned to her home in Vermont."

"And who is Miss Delia Webster?" she had inquired, with unmistakable acidity.

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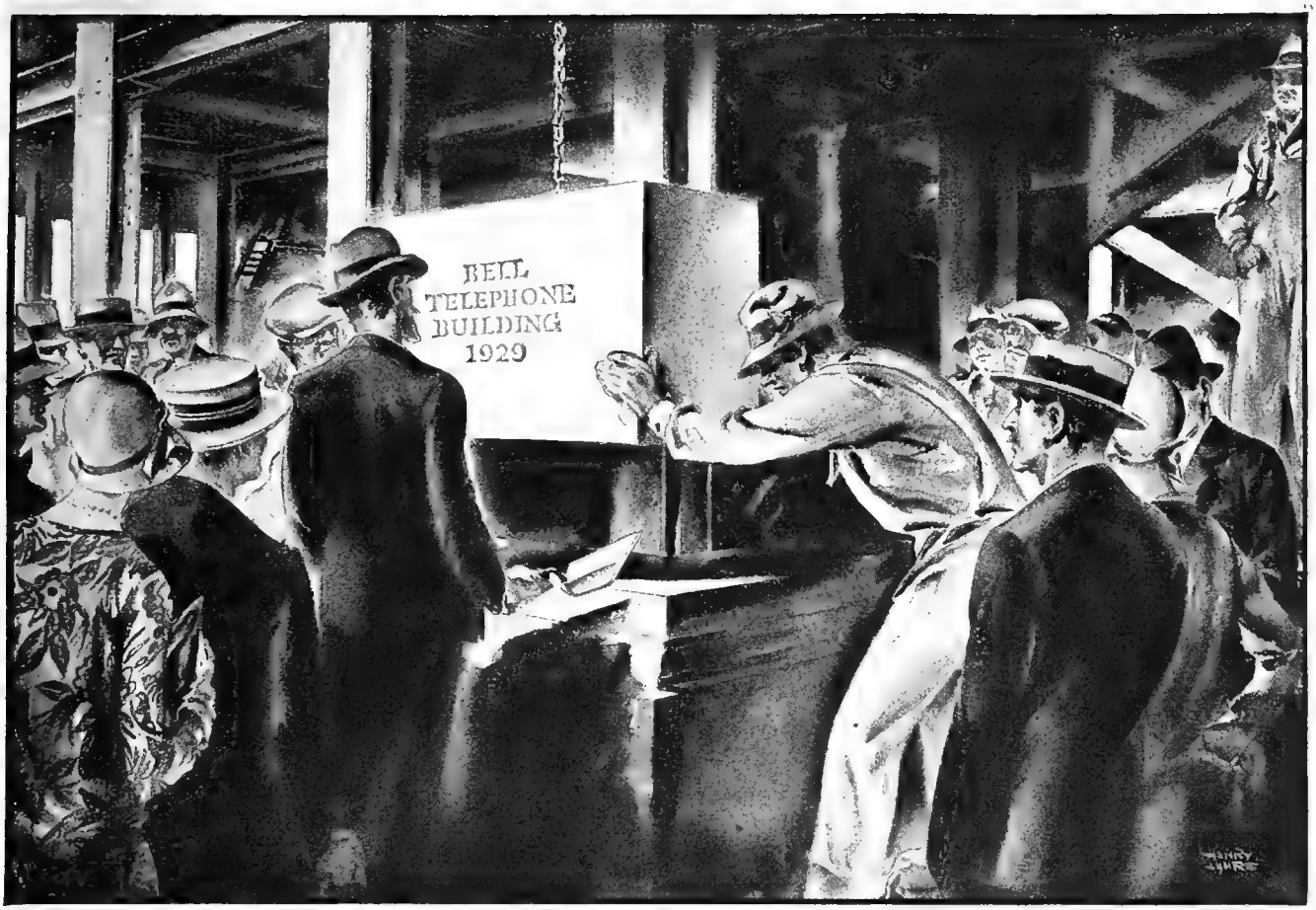

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"If she'd been a man, now," suggested Georgiana.

"If she'd been a man she would have shared the fortunes of her principal, the Reverend Mr. Fairbanks, who has *not* returned to his home in Ohio, and will not—for fifteen years."

"Do you think it an agreeable subject of conversation?" inquired Georgiana.

"Then I will change it," I said. "The other day the editor of the Smithland *Bee* was walking along the street with his little daughter and was shot down by a doctor."

"Horrible!" exclaimed Georgiana. "Why?"

"Self-defense," I answered. "And last week in the court room in Mount Sterling a man was shot by his brother-in-law during the sitting of court."

"And why did *he* kill *him?*"

"Self-defense!" I answered. "And in Versailles a man down in the street was assassinated with a rifle fired from the garret of a tavern. Self-defense. And in Lexington a young man shot and killed another for drawing his handkerchief from his pocket. Self-defense!—the sense of the court being that whatever such an action might mean in other civilized countries, in Kentucky and under the circumstances—the young fellows were quarreling—it naturally betokened the reaching for a revolver. Thus in Kentucky, Georgiana, and during a heated discussion, a man cannot blow his nose but at the risk of his life."

"I'll see that you never carry a handkerchief," said Georgiana. "So remember—don't you ever reach for one!"

"And the other day in Eddysville," I went on, "two men fought a duel by going to a doctor's shop and having him open a vein in the arm of each. Just before they fainted from exhaustion they made signs that their honour was satisfied, so the doctor tied up the veins. I see that you don't believe it, but it's true."

"And why did they fight a duel in that way?"

"I give it up," I said, "unless it was in self-defense. We are a most remarkable society of self-defenders. But if every man who fights in Kentucky is merely engaged in warding off a murderous attack upon his life, who does all the murderous attacking? You know the seal of our commonwealth: two gentlemen in evening dress shaking hands, and with one voice declaring, 'United, we stand; divided, we fall.' So far as the temper of our time goes, these two gentlemen might well be represented as twenty paces apart, and as calling out, 'United, we stood; divided, *you* fall!' Killings and duels! Killings and duels! Do you think we need these as proofs of courage? Do you suppose that the Kentuckians of our day are braver than the pioneers? Do you suppose that any people ever elevated its ideal of courage in the eyes of the world by all the homicides and all the duels that it could count? There is only one way in which any civilized people has ever done that; there is only one way in which any civilized people has ever been able to impress the world very deeply with a belief in the reality and the nobility of its ideal of courage: it is by the warlike spirit of its men in times of war, and by the peaceful spirit of its men in times of peace. Only, you must add this: that when these times of peace have come on, and it is no longer possible for such a people to realize its ideal of courage in arms, it is nevertheless driven to express the ideal in other ways—by monuments, arches, inscriptions, statues, literature, pictures, all in honour of those of their countrymen who lived the ideal before the world and left it more lustrous in their dying. That is the full reason why we know how brave a people the Greeks were—by their peaceful ways of honouring valour in times of peace. And that in part is why no nation in the world doubts the courage of the English, because when the English are not fighting they are forever doing something to honour those who fought well. So that they never have a peace but they turn it into preparation for the next war.

"And that is why, as the outside world looks in upon us today and sifts the evidence of whether or not we are a brave people, it does not find the proof of this in our homicides and duels, but in the spirit of our forefathers of the Revolution, in the soldiers of the wilderness and of Indian warfare, of the war of 1812, of the war with Mexico, at Cerro Gordo, at Buena Vista, at Palo Alto, at Resaca de la Palma. Wherever the Kentuckians have fought as soldiers, many or few, on whatever battlefield, in whatsoever cause, there you may see whether they know what it is to be men, and whether they have an ideal of courage that is worth the name.

"Then a few years ago in Frankfort twenty thousand people followed to the grave the bodies of the men who had fallen in Mexico. The State has raised a monument to them, to the soldiers of 1812, to those who fought at the River Raisin. The Legislature has ordered a medal to be struck in honour of a boy who had defended his ensign. No man

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can make a public speech in Kentucky without mention of Encancion and Monterey, or of the long line of battles in which every generation of our people has fought. This is the other proof that in times of peace we do not forget. It is not much, but it is of the right kind—it is the soldier's monument, it is the soldier's medal, it is the soldier's funeral oration, it is the recognition by the people of its ideal of courage in times of peace. And with every other brave people this proof passes as the sign universal. But our homicides and our duels, nearly all of them brought about in the name—even under the fear—of courage, what effect have they had in giving us, abroad, our reputation as a community? I ask myself the question: what if all the men who have killed their personal enemies or been killed by them in Kentucky, and if all the men who have killed their personal friends or been killed by them in Kentucky, had spent their love of fighting and their love of courage upon a monument to the Pioneers—such a monument as stands nowhere else in the world, and might fitly stand in this State to commemorate the winning of the West? Would the world think the better or the worse of the Kentucky ideal of bravery?

"I had not meant to talk to you so long on this subject," I added, in apology, "but I have been thinking of these things lately since I have been so much in town."

"I am interested," said Georgiana; "but as I agree with you, we need not both speak." But she looked pained, and I sought to give a happier turn to the conversation.

"There is only one duel I ever heard of that gave me any pleasure, and that one never came off. A few years ago a Kentuckian wrote a political satire on an Irishman in Illinois—wrote it as a widow. The Irishman wished to fight. The widow offered to marry the Irishman, if such a sacrifice would be accepted as satisfactory damages. The Irishman sent a challenge, and the Kentuckian chose cavalry broadswords of the largest size. He was a giant; he had the longest arms of any man in Illinois; he could have mowed Erin down at a stroke like a green milkweed; he had been trained in dueling with oak-trees. You never heard of him: his name is Abraham Lincoln."

"I have heard of him, and I have seen him—in Union County, before I came here," said Georgiana, with enthusiasm.

"He came here once to hear Mr. Clay speak," I resumed; "and I saw them walking together one day under the trees at Ashland—the two most remarkable-looking men that I ever beheld together or in human form."

My few acres touch the many of the great statesman. Georgiana and I often hear of the movements of his life, as two little boats in a quiet bay are tossed by the storms of the ocean. Any reference to him always makes us thoughtful, and we fell silent now.

"Georgiana," I said at length, softly. "It's all in self-defense. I believe you promised to marry me in self-defense."

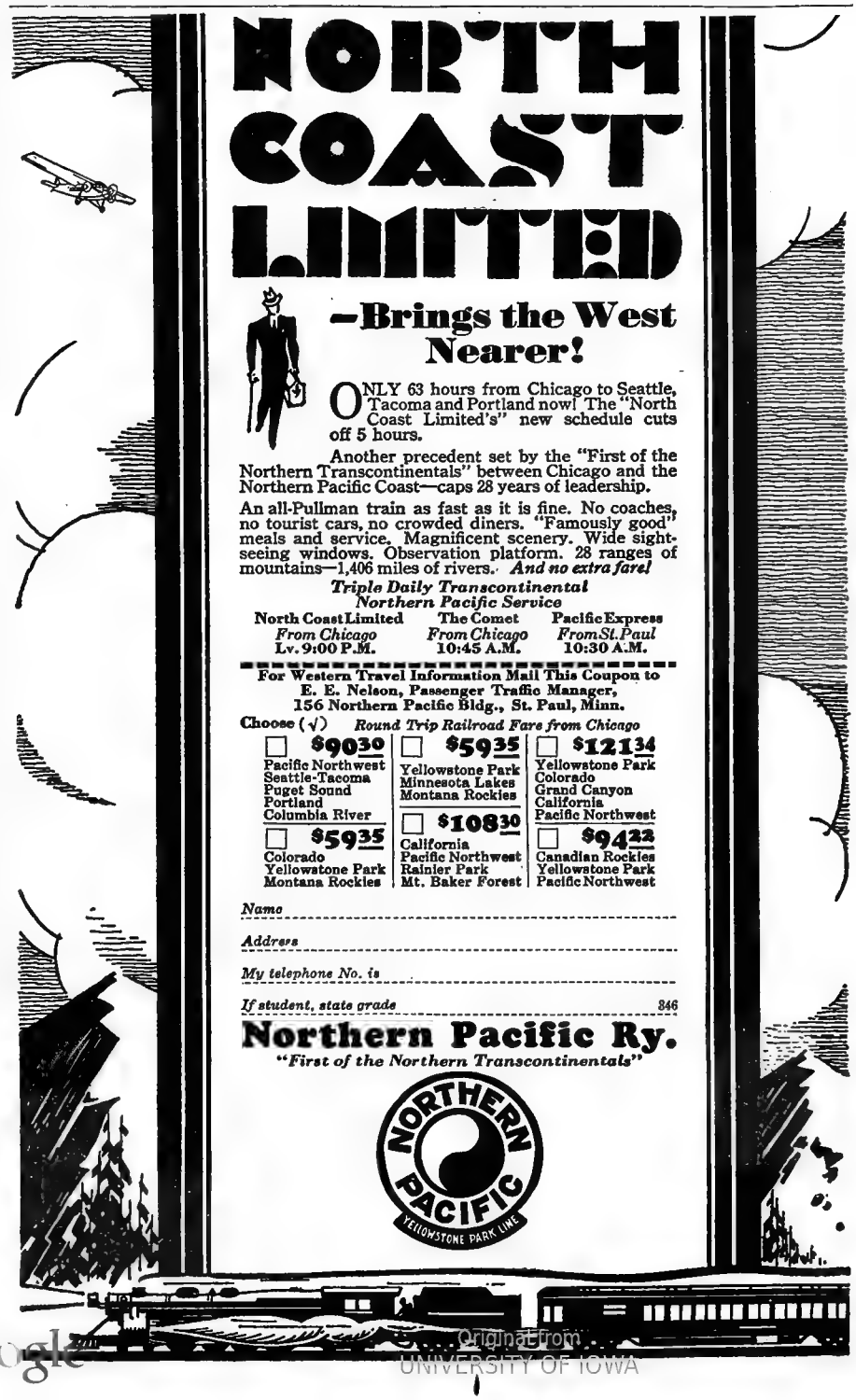
"I did!" she said, promptly.

"Well, I certainly asked *you* in self-defense, Miss Cobb," I replied. "And now in a few days, according to the usage of my time, I am going to take your life—even at the peril of my own. If you desire, it is your privilege to examine the deadly weapons before the hour of actual combat," and I held out my arms to her appealingly.

She bent her body delicately aside, as always.

"I am upset," she said, discouragingly. "You have been abusing Kentucky."

"Ah, that is the trouble!" I answered. "You wish me to become more interested in my fellow-creatures. And then you will not let me speak of what they do. And the other day you told me that I am not perfectly natural with anything but nature. Nature is the only thing that is perfectly natural with me. When I study nature there are no delicate or dangerous or forbidden subjects. The trees have no evasions. The weeds are honest. Running water is not trying to escape. The sunsets are not coloured with hypocrisy. The lightning is not revenge. Everything stands forth in the sincerity of its being, and nature invites me to exercise the absolute liberty of my mind upon all life. I am bidden to master and proclaim whatsoever truth she has fitted me to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grasp. If I am worthy to investigate, none are offended; if I should be wise enough to discover any law of creation, the entire world would express its thanks. Imagine my being assassinated because I had published a complete report upon the life and habits of the field-mouse!"

"If one mouse published a report on the life and habits of another, there'd be a fight all over the field," said Georgiana.

"A ridiculous extreme," I replied. "But after you have grown used to study nature with absolute freedom and absolute peace, think how human life repels you. You may not investigate, you may not speak out, you may not even think, you may not even feel. You are not allowed to reveal what is concealed, and you are required to conceal what is revealed. Natural! Have you ever known any two men to be perfectly natural with each other except when they were fighting? As for the men that I associate with every day, they weigh their words out to one another as the apothecary weighs his poisons, or the grocer his gunpowder."

"You forget," said Georgiana, "that we are living in a very extraordinary time, when everybody is sensitive and excited."

"It is so always and everywhere," I replied. "You may never study life as you study nature. With men you must take your choice: liberty for your mind and a prison for your body; liberty for your body and a prison for your mind. Nearly all people choose the latter; we know what becomes of the few who do not."

But this reference to the times led us to speak slowly and solemnly of what all men now are speaking—war that must come between the North and the South. We agreed that it would come from each side as a blazing torch to Kentucky, which lies between the two and is divided between the two in love and hate—to Kentucky, where the ideal of a soldier's life is always the ideal of a man's duty and utmost glory.

At last I felt that my time had come.

"Georgiana," I said, "there is one secret I have never shared with you. It is the only fear I have ever felt regarding our future. But, if there should be a war—you'd better know it now—leave you or not leave you, I am going to join the army."

She grew white and faint with the thought of a day to come. But at last she said:

"Yes; you must go."

"I know one thing," I added, after a long silence; "if I could do my whole duty as a Kentuckian—as an American citizen—as a human being—I should have to fight on both sides."

I have thus set down in a poor way a part of the only talk I ever had with Georgiana on these subjects during the year 1851.

Yesterday, about sunset, the earth and sky were beautiful with that fulness of

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peace which things often attain at the moment before they alter and end. The hour seemed to me the last serene loveliness of summer, soon to be ruffled by gales and blackened by frosts.

Georgiana stood at her window looking into the west. The shadows of the trees in my yard fell longer and longer across the garden towards her. Darkest among these lay the shapes of the cedars and the pines in which the redbird had lived. Her whole attitude bespoke a mood surrendered to memory; and I felt sure that we two were thinking of the same thing.

AS SHE HAS APPROACHED that mystical revelation of life which must come with our marriage, Georgiana's gaiety has grown subtly overcast. It is as if the wild strain in her were a little sad at having to be captured at last; and I too experience an indefinable pain that it has become my lot to subdue her in this way. The thought possesses me that she submits to marriage because she cannot live intimately with me and lavish her love upon me in any other relation; and therefore I draw back with awe from the idea of taking such possession of her as I will and must.

As she stood at her window yesterday evening she caught sight of me across the yard and silently beckoned. I went over and looked expectantly up at her, waiting and smiling.

"Well, what is it?" I asked at length, as her eyes rested on me with the fulness of affection.

"Nothing. I wanted to see you standing down there once more. Haven't you thought of it? This is the last time—the last of the window, the last of the garden, the end of the past. Everything after this will be so different. Aren't you a little sorry that you are going to marry me?"

"Will you allow me to fetch the minister this instant?"

In the evening they put on her bridal dress and sent over for me, and, drawing the parlour doors aside, blinded me with the sight of her standing in there, as if waiting in duty for love to claim its own. As I saw her then I have but to close my eyes to see her now. I scarce know why, but that vision of her haunts my mind mysteriously.

I see a fresh snowdrift in a secret green valley between dark mountains. The sun must travel far and be risen high to reach it; but when it does, its rays pour down from near the zenith and are most powerful and warm; then in a little while the whole valley is green again, and a white mist, rising from it, muffles the face of the sun.

Oh, Georgiana! Georgiana! Do not fade away from me as I draw you to me.

My last solitary candle flickers in the socket: it is in truth the end—the end of the past.

(To be concluded)

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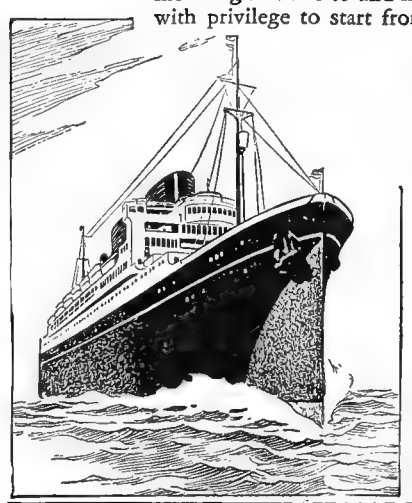

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Travel News

By Roger Shaw

Alaska Looks Ahead

Scenically "The Great Country" or "The Continent," as the native word Alaska has it, may ignore the challenge of picturesque regions equipped with publicity bureaus. Her profits from tourist patronage might be greater if her charms were more frequently emblazoned in printers' ink, but alone in her bulk and grandeur she may rest assured that those who visit her carry away memories of cumulative value.

A most impressive experience is a summer voyage northward from Seattle or Vancouver via that sheltered waterway winding through a heavily forested archipelago, seldom far from the Pacific and passing close by snow-crowned ranges. The visitor finds Mount McKinley National Park surpassingly beautiful. He appreciates the potential power-development sites, convenient to tidewater, on the glacier-fed rivers cascading to the sea. His unpractised eye estimates the apparently endless timber stands that make Southern Alaska the great future source of our paper supply. Beneath the surface he cannot see, but he has the testimony of engineers attached to the Department of the Interior.

Yet he may learn little of the real Alaska or of its problems. Widely varying judgments as to the value and future of this great country are to be found among those who presumably know her best. In the world outside, easy generalizations occupy the place of ascertainable fact. First is the inaccurate title, "The Land of the Eskimo." More than half of Alaska's population of 55,000 is white, largely transplanted Americans, holding by a thin and far-flung line this vast territory of 590,884 square miles.

Less than half of the population are of aboriginal Eskimo or Indian stocks. The Eskimo lives in only a small part of this great country, and numerically has far greater representation in Siberia, northern Canada, and in Greenland. Contact with the white man has not improved the Eskimo, and missionary effort is largely offset by the saloon. "Disease engendered by vice, periodical epidemics, and above all, tuberculosis, are bringing about not the gradual but the rapid extinction of the Eskimo," writes David P. McAstocker in *The Catholic World*.

The government appropriates $200,000 yearly for the education of its wards in the north. Enrolment records show slight increases, but attendance records show three-fifths of the pupils absent. Compulsory attendance is being considered by Congress, but the wisdom of such legislation is seriously questioned. Stefanson advised the white man not to meddle in the Eskimo's affairs. Teaching him the three R's takes him out of his class, points out Mr. McAstocker, and when educated, he cannot cast in his lot with the whites, for his whole race remains separated from them by barriers of class. Education, other than in hygiene or help in his own industries, offers no advantages to the Eskimo, and has been shown to have contributed to his discontent and degradation.

The question: Who lives in Alaska? is answered by Mary Lee Davis in *Scribner's*. Though the fact is recognized by few, Alaska is inhabited by Alaskans. Three-fifths of the whites are American-born. Of the foreign-born, 41 per cent. are Scandinavians, 27 per cent. are British, and 10 per cent. Teutonic—ideal elements to pioneer a great country in northern latitudes. Among the Indians and Eskimos there are an even number of men and women, the normal natural balance of a people at home. There are 2000 foreign-born white women and 10,000 foreign-born white men. Many of these are adventurers not yet financially able to send for their kin. But more than half of the American-born whites are women, a great many of whom came north as "missioners," as nurses, court stenographers, and as clerks in government agencies. They married and remained. The turnover in these professions is large. The pioneer breed of American frontier mother still lives.

"The hectic day of the great stampedes is fortunately long past," writes Mrs. Davis, "and with it went the flaming dance-hall of the north and the woman of the dance-hall type. Gold is here, in plenty, but only for hard winning; and the gold-producer today sells the cheapest commodity upon the world's market, all else having increased in price and his product alone being fixed in standard value."

The call of the wild has irresistible seduction for many, while others see Alaska utterly devoid of any conceivable attraction, writes Mr. McAstocker. Farming is a subject for interesting speculation. Experts have declared the agricultural possibilities of northern Alaska as null and void, yet they admit exceptions of unusually productive land, even above the Arctic Circle. A possible parallel story may be seen in the development of the Canadian Northwest, where drainage and deep ploughing have removed the ice from the soil and let the sun in.

T. A. Rickard has pointed out that if Finland, higher in latitude than Nome, with 50,000 square miles of available land, can support 3,000,000 people and export butter, beef, bacon, and grain, there is no reason why Alaska, with 90,000 square miles available for agriculture and pasturage, should not support at least 2,250,000 people and do a great many more remarkable things. The summer tourist may envision a splendid future ahead of this enormous and little-encouraged colony of Uncle Sam.

Kaiyuh Canyon, near Valdez, one of Alaska's premier scenic spots

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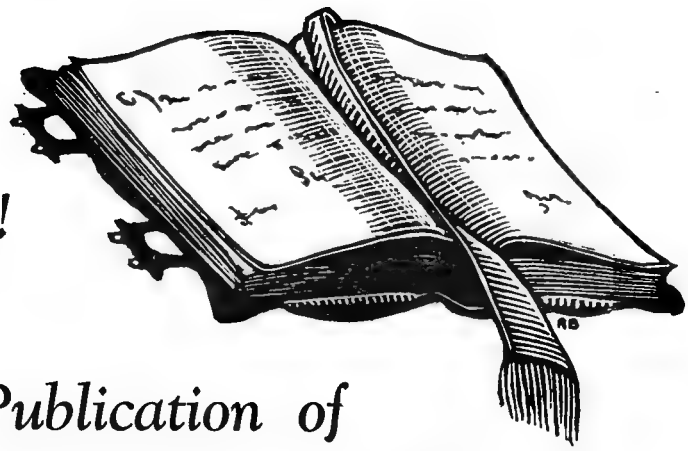

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Financial Signposts

THE RECENT DECISION of the New York Stock Exchange to list the securities of investment trusts of the management type is characterized by the New York Trust Company as another step in the remarkable progress of the investment trust movement in the United States in the past five years. It is pointed out that, aided by the favourable security market of the past several years, the number and size of investment trusts have expanded enormously, until present estimates show at least 450 in operation, representing an increase of over 100 per cent. within the past year.

This new ruling actually went into operation on June 26, when trading privileges on the Exchange were granted to the Sterling Securities Corporation and to the General Public Service Corporation. The Sterling listed 600,000 shares of Class A no-par common stock and 500,000 shares of $20-par preference stock, while the General Public Service Corporation listed 595,772 shares of no-par common stock.

The listing of investment trust securities, however, applies only to those of the management or discretionary type, and applicants must show that they have enjoyed a reasonable period of profitable operation. Annual financial statements must be filed with the Exchange, and the corporations may be called upon for semi-annual or even quarterly statements as well, in addition to furnishing details of the form of management, the charter, and a general list of the securities held. With the standards of the exchange thus applied to the investment trust, additional safeguards are provided for investors who are interested in securities of this class.

The New York Trust Company has estimated the value of investment trust securities eligible for listing on the New York Stock Exchange to be approximately $2,000,000,000.

Real Estate Financing

THE PUBLIC FINANCING of real estate enterprises has been one of the most pronounced and impressive financial developments of a decade, according to Harland H. Allen, for the past several years in the research department of Halsey, Stuart & Company. Mr. Allen's statement was made in the course of an address before the National Association of Real Estate Boards, during the annual meeting of the Association recently in Boston, and the following interesting figures were offered in support of it:

> "ONE THING *I am more positive of than I was even forty years ago —the electrical development of America has only well begun.*
>
> *"So long as there remains a single task being done by men or women which electricity could do as well, so long will that development be incomplete. What this development will mean in comfort, in leisure, and in opportunity for the larger life of the spirit we have only begun to realize. Great days are ahead of this nation and the world. And electricity will have a great part to play, granted only that it can be unfettered, with full opportunity for the largest possible individual initiative and energy."*
>
> —THOMAS A. EDISON.

Even as late as 1919 the public financing of real estate development projects totaled less than 2.5 per cent. of the gross volume of corporate securities sold in the United States, and in the entire country only about $57,000,000 of real estate borrowings were handled in that year as publicly offered bond issues. By 1928, however, this volume had increased almost 1500 per cent., to $809,000,000, and the total of real estate bonds rose to more than one-sixth of the bond issues offered to the general public. It is perhaps even more significant, he added, to note that in 1921 only about one-fortieth of the new building permits in the country were financed through bond issues which any investor could purchase, while in 1928 over one-fourth of the new building permits were financed as mortgage bonds. Every year since 1919 has witnessed a gain in the percentage of new construction financed by publicly offered securities.

The growing standardization of quality and service features in commercial and industrial buildings, the vast increase of steel fabrication with its elastic features and great durability, and the increased size of unit borrowings on real estate were advanced as the principal explanations for this impressive growth in public financing and as "evidence that this growth will continue until public financing of real estate constitutes perhaps the major class of all long-term security business." It was pointed out that in 1922 there were only about 55 public issues of real estate bonds in the million-dollar class, while in 1928—six years later—there were 192 such issues.

Regarding the effect of high interest rates in curtailing the extent of new building, Mr. Allen added, "construction volume has without any doubt been reduced lately. But as we have seen from statistics of building permits, above-the-ground construction has been on a gradual, although not very serious, decline since the peak was reached in 1925. Certainly, with money rates going down and down and down through 1925, 1926, and 1927, the cost of capital was not because of this recession.

"It cannot be denied that, with real estate activity dependent as it now increasingly is upon public offerings for its new capital resources, we must expect that until there is a softening in public interest rates the industry cannot look

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Investment Suggestions

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4. COMMONWEALTH YEAR BOOK: An illustrated detailed statement of the operations of the Commonwealth Edison Company, of much interest to investors. Offered by Commonwealth Edison Company, 72 W. Adams St., Chicago, Ill.

5. SERVING A NATION, an illustrated booklet telling about the Cities Service Organization and its fiscal agents. Offered by Henry L. Doherty & Company, 60 Wall Street, New York City.

6. HOW TO SELECT SAFE BONDS, a pamphlet outlining some sound investment principles, offered by George M. Forman & Co., 112 West Adams Street, Chicago, Ill.

7. INVESTORS' GUIDE, a detailed statement of sound investments, is offered by Greenebaum Sons Investment Company, La Salle and Madison Streets, Chicago, Ill.

9. SECURITY BONDS, a name applied to 6% real estate bonds which are guaranteed as to principal and interest by the Maryland Casualty Company, a $40,000,000 corporation, are described in an illustrated booklet. Offered by J. A. W. Iglehart & Co., 102 St. Paul St., Baltimore, Md.

10. FOREIGN DOLLAR BONDS, a booklet containing valuable suggestions for bond buyers and presenting the record of foreign loans in American markets. Offered by National City Company, 55 Wall Street, New York City.

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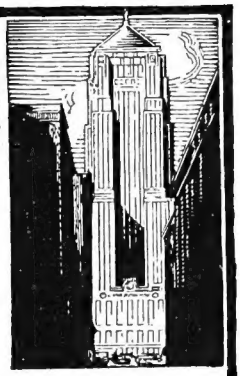

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for stimulation from capital seeking a market. On the other hand, there appears to be a large element of optimism for industry as a whole from the fact that such a large section of industry—as represented by construction directly and by the many ramified lines which depend upon it—has been so definitely in restraint for half a decade, and is not now contributing to the boom conditions which are threatening to carry us into inflation. We are assured that between the requirements of new residential standards, the re-housing of business on an efficient basis, improved road building and the natural development of utilities, we have a basic core of industrial activity which will continue through the months ahead to give large employment to the people of the country and contribute substantially to maintaining the momentum of business."

Reparations and Foreign Bonds

AMERICAN INVESTORS in European dollar-bonds have every reason to regard the Reparations agreement with much satisfaction, according to J. A. W. Iglehart and Company, investment bankers of Baltimore, in a recent discussion of the new agreement and its effect upon world trade. It was pointed out that the agreement places these investments on a more stable foundation, and that, with the prospect of further improvements in European industry, trade and finance and with the security of European dollar-bonds enhanced and the supply of them diminishing, the major trend of such bonds in the hands of American investors should be toward higher levels.

The acceptance of the Young plan is termed by the Guaranty Trust Company of New York as the most important international financial agreement since the war, by means of which "the course of world trade may be directed and the standard of living in many countries may be affected. As has been pointed out by the Experts' Committee, it will lay a foundation on which world peace may be preserved."

The Bank of International Settlements provided by the plan is a unique development in international finance. But while it has been enthusiastically endorsed by the Experts' Committee and by many leading bankers in this country, the possibility of Federal Reserve participation is frowned upon by official Washington. It will have a nominal capital of $100,000,000, and the initial subscription of one-fourth of this amount will be divided among the seven interested countries, although, as the Guaranty Trust survey point out in its discussion, "it is expected that the American share will be contributed by private sources."

Of course, the primary function of the bank will be to handle the reparations payments and to regulate the flow of German marks to the creditor nations in ways that will not disturb German exchange. "Deposits will be accepted by the bank from the creditor nations, from central banks, and from central banks for clearing purposes. Deposits for guarantee funds for mobilization purposes, special deposits of the German government, and deposits growing out of conditions to facilitate reparations in general will also be accepted."

In thus uniting the central banks of issue of the Allied nations and Germany, the way has been paved for extension of membership later to the central banks of other countries also, "provided the countries they represent are on a gold basis."

Branch or Group Banking?

WHILE BRANCH and chain banking has developed rapidly in certain sections of the country, Illinois bankers have adhered consistently, by law and by inclination, to the independent banking system. A few weeks ago the Illinois majority opposition to chain or branch banking was emphasized again in a resolution to this effect by the convention of the Illinois Bankers' Association.

Preceding this vote Rudolf S. Hecht, President of the Hibernia Bank & Trust Company of New Orleans and Chairman of the Economic Policy Commission of the American Bankers' Association, addressed the convention and gave some interesting figures regarding banking developments throughout the country.

He pointed to the fact that in the twenty-six largest cities there are 256 banks which have more than $20,000,000,000 in deposits, or one-third of all the deposits of the country. Also, of the 26,000 banks now existing, 3230 are branches of the large banks in San Francisco, Los Angeles, Detroit, and New York, and two-thirds of the banks in California in 1928 were branches of some sort. He believes that 10 per cent. of the nominally independent American banks are linked up in chains, and that the opposition to chain banking is apparently weakening.

In California the Bank of Italy National Trust and Savings Association leads with 284 branches, followed by the Security-First National Bank of Los Angeles with 150 offices, and the Bank of America of California with 141. The American Trust Company of San Francisco, recently merged with the Crocker First National Bank, maintained 97 branches.

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Music and Radio

By ALFRED V. FRANKENSTEIN

COLUMBIA'S MONUMENTAL recording of a complete *Carmen* gives us the opportunity to put this opera to the test of the study. An atmosphere of high voltage clings about the *Carmen* of the opera house. It is a singer's show, a circus in four acts for the Calvé, Farrar, Jeritza, or Garden of the moment. The manner of performance of the title part claims interest almost to the exclusion of other considerations. If your Carmen swaggers her cigarettes, cards, and castanets in a fashion unprecedented, there is a flurry of excitement greater than that accompanying the first performance of a new masterpiece. When a performance of the opera is arranged in which attention is centered on the total effect, as in the performance given here some years ago by the music studio of the Moscow Art Theatre, values are discovered in the score which are overlooked in the hubbub of prima donna worship that accompanies a Metropolitan production. The new records, made by singers of the Opéra and Opéra-Comique of Paris who are unknown in America, serve also to focus attention upon *Carmen* the opera rather than upon Mlle. Raymonde Visconti, the spot-lighted mezzo of the day.

Carmen holds a place unique among French operas in the present-day repertory in that it compels the admiration of the highly cultivated musical mind and of the most garlicky of the gallery gods. *Faust*, with its red-fire-devil playing up to an idiotic tenor and soprano not worth the trouble, is most dearly beloved by arrangers of cornet solos. *Thaïs* is the costumers' and concertmasters' delight. *Pelléas*, with its inarticulate ecstasy fumbling between blind windows, brings out the concert-goers, as does the finest of modern French operas, *Louise*. *Carmen* alone exercises a pull on all classes of the musical world.

The composer of the opera is a vague figure with a slight literature. Of his other works the stupid *Pearl Fishers* occasionally is heard; the slight and unimportant suite from his music to Daudet's tragedy, *L'Arlésienne*, is sprayed from every radio, and an *Agnus Dei* is in the repertory of every movie organist. Of Bizet's personality nothing much remains but a legend to the effect that he died of a broken heart after the failure of *Carmen* at its première.

A study of what is apparently the only English biography of Alexandre César Léopold Bizet, commonly called Georges Bizet, which is the work of an English writer named D. C. Parker, reveals a personality who is refreshing considering his period. For Bizet, it appears, was a composer without conviction of a preordained, Heaven-sent artistic mission. He came of a musical family, and was a Parisian who knew his Paris, on whose student days Paris set her seal of official approval (he won the prize of Rome in 1857, at the age of 19) and to whom the theatres of Paris were never closed. Paris never ran after him, but Paris never hooted him off the stage. Not one of his major works but was written to order, nor was he one to set his face against revision if singers or managers demanded. In his relations with the world he was everything that his contemporary, Wagner, was not. Bizet, friend of the world, died at thirty-six, having witnessed the immediate acceptance and eventual demise of almost all his works. Wagner, enemy of the world, died at sixty-nine, having fought through rejection and ridicule to the acceptance of works whose death is still far off.

The libretto of *Carmen* is incredibly vulgar compared to the story by Mérimée on which it is based. Mérimée brings us the tale of a hot and acrid country of plains and mountains, of a murderous and sensual gypsy heroine, of a sullen and conscienceless bandit hero. Meilhac and Halévy, the librettists, bring us a Spain of toreadors and flowered mantillas, a hero slobbering remorse in every other line, and a pure little maiden of the mountains as a foil to Carmen, who herself is given the virtue of being unable to lie. Parker explains that morality was demanded of the libretto by the direction of the Opéra-Comique, for which it was written. He gives an amusing account of the tempest raised by the idea of presenting this plot at the Opéra-Comique, the "family theatre," dedicated to sweetness and light and the happy ending.

> A WORK OF ART is not made any greater because one thousand people enjoy it today, while only one hundred enjoyed it yesterday. If the popular view were an index of the value of a work we should be compelled to see in *The Bohemian Girl* and *Maritana* two of the masterpieces of music, which, as Euclid says, is absurd. Popularity has its own meaning and its own lesson; but it neither means nor teaches anything unless the source of it be carefully examined. At the first plebiscite the vote went to Barabbas.—D. C. PARKER.

Great operas consist of the combination of great music with fine librettos. No opera can, by virtue of its music, rise superior to its book. The failure of *Carmen* to be a great opera is due to the bad work of the librettists, which in turn is due to the demands of the Paris public of 1875. But the work has been great in its influence, if not in itself. It came in a rococo day, when exotic stage stuff was required. It alone put the punch of genuineness in its exoticism. And so it has had descendants. How many of the modern French pieces on Spanish subjects owe their origin to *Carmen?* Should we have had *España* or *Iberia* or *The Spanish Hour* without *Carmen?* To what extent did it affect the Spanish renaissance of Albeniz, de Falla and Turina? Did it not have its effect upon the Russians with their *Spanish Caprices* and *Grands pas espangnoles?* I believe it had a great deal to do with all these, and therefore it is a work of infinitely greater significance than a mere prima donna's four-act circus.

TOSCANINI makes his Victor début with one of the perfect creations of musical literature, *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*, by Paul Dukas. Dukas is a composer whose fate it has been to compose a single work so popular as to crowd out his other creations. He has worked slowly. His opera, *Ariane and Bluebeard*, took him ten years. His sonata for the piano called forth from Claude Debussy a picture of that eternal solidity of sound which only a great composer is capable of achieving. *The Sorcerer's Apprentice* is not as great a work as *Ariane*. It is not as great a work as the sonata. It may not even be as great a work as the "dance poem" called *The Peri*. But it is one of the perfect tone poems, one of the few pieces of program music that really sticks to and illustrates its program.

The general scheme of the program is well known. It is based upon Goethe's *Der Zauberlehrling*, which in turn is based upon an episode in *The Lie Fancier* of Lucian of Samatosa, that Hellenic Mencken. Lucian had a purpose in writing which we are likely to overlook. He was the flea in the toga of mythology, the bedbug in the couch of philosophy. The picturesqueness of the incident appealed to Goethe; the incident plus Goethe's verse inspired Dukas; the combination of Goethe and Dukas astonishes us. But behind it all, remember *The Lie Fancier*, that compendium of fictitious myths laughing at systems to hog-tie the universe with words, to explain the cosmos with anthropomorphic explanations. Lucian's story—of the woe resulting from a bit of amateur magic—is one which, once read, will always be remembered.

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